

THE SEEDS OF DEMOCRACY PROGRAM IN THE WEST NIS: AN EVALUATION

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Prepared by

**Ronald G. Ridker
Andrea Lipschitz**

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International Science and Technology Institute, Inc. (ISTI)
1820 North Fort Myer Drive, Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22209
Telephone: (703) 807-2080
Fax: (703) 807-1126
ISTI@ISTIINC.COM

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABA/CEELI	American Bar Association/Central and East European Law Initiative
Eco-NGO	NGO specializing in environmental activities. Abbreviated to NGO where there is no ambiguity.
EPAC	Environmental Public Advocacy Center, established by ABA/CEELI and EcoPravo.
ISAR	Initiative for Social Action and Renewal in Eurasia
ISAR-DC	Main office of ISAR, located in Washington, D.C.
ISAR-West NIS	Branch of ISAR with headquarters in Kyiv and operations in West NIS. Abbreviated to “ISAR” where there is no ambiguity.
NGO	Non-governmental organization.
ODA	Official Development Assistance
West NIS	Western region of Newly Independent States: Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. Sometimes denoted as WNIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an evaluation of the “Seeds of Democracy” program, a part of Cooperative Agreement number CCN-0003-A-00-3048 between ISAR-DC and USAID that was implemented in the Western Sector of the Newly Independent States (West NIS) by ISAR-West NIS. This agreement became effective May 1, 1993 and closed May 31, 1999 with a no cost extension through December 31, 1999. During this period, the cumulative amount of funds provided to ISAR for this program was \$1.84 million. The program called for ISAR to develop and manage a small-grants and technical assistance program for environmental activities to be undertaken by indigenous NGOs in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova.

The underlying purpose of this program was to encourage and improve the capacity of citizens to undertake actions that would directly or indirectly result in environmental improvements. As such, the objectives of the ISAR program were two-fold: to address environmental problems and to foster grass-roots participation of citizens in the process of doing so.

Program design and implementation features were excellent, probably representing best practice in this field. The size of grants was kept very small. This policy was established to encourage start-ups and maximize participation, encourage the search for other sources of funds, and discourage applications from well-established organizations and opportunists with non-environmental goals. For a small-grants program, the application process was relatively elaborate, formalized and time-consuming, but considerable one-on-one technical assistance was provided to help with the process. This was done to teach applicants how to formulate projects and write proposals. Many grantees interviewed praised ISAR for this rigorous training and indicated that it was crucial for them to be able to compete for larger grants from other organizations. Once an application was completed to the satisfaction of ISAR staff, it was sent to a board of experts. If it satisfied publicly specified criteria for subject matter and standards, it was ranked along with other satisfactory applications. Awards were then made to the top-ranking proposals depending on the funds available for distribution in a given grant round. Typically only about a third of the applications were funded. Thus, a degree of competition was introduced that encouraged improved quality of projects and performance over time.

Grants were provided in two installments, the second given only after satisfactory evidence was available of progress and appropriate use of funds from the first installment. Likewise, applications for additional funds were accepted only after evidence was provided that the first project was satisfactorily completed. This forced a degree of supervision and accountability that relatively quickly weeded out NGOs whose performance was unsatisfactory. As a consequence of these procedures, misuse of funds was a rare occurrence.

As part of their end-of-project reports, grantees were required to submit answers to a detailed questionnaire that forced a significant degree of self-evaluation focused on the contribution made to the underlying goals of the Seeds of Democracy program. These materials—narrative as well as quantitative – were entered into an elaborate database and used for analytical and reporting purposes.

ISAR provided considerable supporting services to the NGO community as well as to its grantees. Technical assistance was readily available and provided on a one-on-one basis. Some training through workshops and seminars was also provided but was never believed to be a substitute for one-on-one assistance, despite the labor-intensive nature of the latter. In addition, ISAR actively promoted exchange of information and collaboration amongst NGOs through

distribution of a now widely used monthly bulletin, assistance to establish internet connections, the maintenance of databases and directories of NGOs and funding sources, and translation, publication and distribution of books, articles and videos on environmental and NGO issues.

All this was accomplished in a low-key, professional fashion, with a small but highly skilled staff and minimal overhead expenditures – 60% of ISAR-West NIS's budget was devoted to grants – a style that has won everyone's respect. We heard no major criticisms of ISAR's behavior even though we probed for it. The only critical comment we have is that ISAR might usefully have been modestly more proactive in the selection and somewhat more so in evaluation of the projects it funded.

Project outputs and impacts have been substantial and clearly contributed to USAID's strategic objectives relating to both democracy and environment. A series of tables derived from ISAR's project database provides information on numbers of NGOs supported, numbers of grants requested and funded, their geographic distribution, and the percent of projects believed by grantees to have made a significant contribution to nine different categories of impacts that USAID and ISAR desired that these projects achieve. These data were supplemented by our review of narrative reports, interviews, and direct observations to reach the following conclusions:

About 40% of the projects funded included efforts by NGOs and local citizens to improve their environment (planting trees, cleaning waste dumps and stream banks, purifying or protecting drinking water sources, establishing protected land areas) or to persuade others to undertake such actions (e.g., stopping an environmentally detrimental investment or inducing a factory to reduce emissions). While many of these efforts have been successful, they tend to be limited in scope, in large measure because most environmental problems require more resources than small local NGOs can mobilize. On the other hand, they are all valuable as demonstrations that citizens' efforts can make a difference and ISAR and the NGOs attempted to get media coverage in order to publicize this fact.

Nearly all projects served as vehicles for increasing awareness and participation. This was considered a central objective of the Seeds of Democracy program because of the legacy of non-participation during the Soviet era. One approach has been to use pollution monitoring and publication of results. Other ISAR grantees sought to increase public participation by enabling citizens to report their concerns about the environment (for example, by establishing an Environmental Help Line). Both ISAR and its grantees saw work with children and youth as an important way to ensure that the next generation takes greater care of the environment and does not repeat the mistakes of the past. Awareness and participation were also encouraged by grants aimed at developing media interest and capacity to cover environmental issues. As a consequence of these grants, several periodicals with a significant subscription base have been established and a number of documentaries produced and shown on national television. While the database indicates a dramatic increase in the percent of projects including activities aimed at involving the media, most successful cases occurred at the local level. Not only was there more competition for space at the national level, but many national agencies have proved reluctant to publicize events that might irritate powerful interest groups.

Other major goals of these grants included efforts to develop collaborative arrangements with relevant government agencies and to influence policy decisions. Here too, there have been some notable successes, most at the local level, but even a few at the national level.

Finally, and most importantly, ISAR has sought through these projects to create a stronger, more independent and self-sustaining NGO community. Its efforts in this direction have ranged from encouraging joint projects between NGOs and helping others make contact with overseas organizations to developing a new NGO, Ednannia, with nine regional centers to serve as NGO support centers. The result has been the emergence of a pyramid with three tiers. A few – about 10% of ISAR’s grantees – have fully matured, have found alternative sources of funds and have expanded their activities. A somewhat larger group – about a quarter – have developed the necessary managerial and institutional capacities for sustained growth, but have not been so successful in finding alternative sources of funds; they are being forced to cut back their activities. The third group consists of NGOs that have yet to develop the managerial or the financial capacity for sustainability. If an alternative program does not come along soon, many of their leaders will drift away to other activities.

But with one or two exceptions, even organizations that have raised alternative sources of funds remain vulnerable in at least two ways. First, their leadership structure is thin. Few have more than one or two key personnel, in most cases these individuals receive little or no income from the organization, and very few have boards of directors which would see to the recruitment of new leaders. Second, nearly all remain dependent on foreign donors. A government fund established to support NGOs never operated as it was designed and has ceased to exist. There is no culture of private philanthropy and it is unlikely to develop so long as economic conditions remain poor. In Ukraine and Belarus, government regulations do not permit non-profit organizations to receive payment for the services or products they produce. Thus, for nearly all organizations, improving financial sustainability has involved reducing dependence on a single foreign donor. More could be done in this area, for example, by appealing to the large numbers of people from these three countries living abroad. But the fact remains that domestic sources of funds are extremely limited and likely to remain so for some time.

All of these results have been accomplished by ISAR at miniscule cost – \$1.8 million spread over six years. If it were possible to establish a benefit-cost ratio for this program, it would surely be very high.

What does this experience suggest for the future? Most important, is a small grants program in the environmental field still needed?

So far as the environment is concerned, one could argue that during the last six years, the main goal of the ISAR program – to create a larger and more viable Eco-NGO community – has been achieved and that the program would quickly show signs of diminishing returns if it were to be continued. We find this difficult to believe. What is more likely is that a small-grants program like ISAR’s would run into diminishing returns only if it were greatly expanded; on the other hand, in the absence of such a program, the number of Eco-NGOs is likely to decline. Such a program fills a niche in the range of programs necessary to achieve progress on the environmental front, an important and necessary niche that at this stage cannot be filled without outside sources of funds.

So far as democracy-building is concerned, the case for continuing – and indeed for expanding – the program is much stronger. It is difficult to argue that anything like diminishing returns has set in this area. The question here is whether it remains useful to continue linking environment and democracy-building. ISAR has argued convincingly that the environment remains an effective issue to galvanize public participation. Pollution, radiation, toxic dumps, poor water quality, and other tangible threats to public health and well-being directly affect all citizens, regardless of their social position, level of education or profession. Since government officials have an incentive (if

not always the resources) to address environmental problems, this area provides an opportunity for NGOs and government to collaborate. Environment is also an area where NGOs are capable of achieving visible and demonstrative results, showing citizens that they can make a difference. It also an area where children can participate.

None of this speaks to the issue of whether ISAR should be the agency to carry on with a small grants program in this field. But if it is not, we would strongly recommend that whoever does it uses much the same procedures and style that ISAR has used. Nor does this discussion speak to the issue of whether USAID should continue funding a small grants program in this field. USAID deserves a great deal of praise for developing and funding this program in the first place; whether it should continue to do so is separate question. But some external agency is needed and USAID continues to include grass-roots democracy building amongst its strategic objectives.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report is an evaluation of the “Seeds of Democracy” program, a part of Cooperative Agreement number CCN-0003-A-00-3048 between ISAR-DC and USAID that was implemented in the Western Sector of the Newly Independent States (West NIS) by ISAR-West NIS. This agreement became effective May 1, 1993 and closed May 31, 1999 with a no cost extension through December 31, 1999. During this period, the cumulative amount of funds provided to ISAR for this program was \$1.84 million (see Table 1, in Annex A). The program called for ISAR to develop and manage a small-grants and technical assistance program for environmental activities to be undertaken by indigenous NGOs in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. This report attempts to determine how well this task was implemented, what was accomplished by the NGOs supported by these grants, and what lessons can be learned from this experience. While the focus is on Ukraine, where over two-thirds of the funds were distributed, the report presents statistical data for each of the three countries and discusses some points of comparison. The report is based on a review of USAID and ISAR documents and interviews with representatives of USAID, ISAR, NGOs (most funded, but some not funded, by ISAR), other foreign NGOs, and others knowledgeable about the role of environmental NGOs in Ukraine (see sources in Annex D).

The overall purpose of this program was to encourage, and improve the capacity of, citizens to undertake actions that would directly or indirectly result in environmental improvements. Since this cannot be done without developing the capacity of individuals and their willingness to undertake civic actions in this sphere, this program can also be viewed as a specific instance of grass-roots democracy building. In fact, the two goals, environmental improvements and democracy building, are intertwined in this program and cannot be separated. This evaluation will attempt to assess the extent to which the program led to improvements in both dimensions.

2. PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The strategy was straight-forward and simple: establish a fund for a program that offers small grants to indigenous NGOs (except scientific research, commercial and political organizations) for projects in the environment field; require that applicants compete for this limited pool of funds by submitting a detailed proposal to a board of experts who rank applications according to a specified set of criteria; within limits set by the budget, fund the top-ranked proposals that meet acceptable standards; and provide both applicants and subsequent grantees with training, technical assistance and other forms of support as needed. It is a strategy that has been used by private foundations and public aid donors in a variety of fields for some time. Whether it works effectively or not depends on the context—the cultural, institutional, legal and economic environment—in which it is applied, on how well the detailed program design takes these contextual features into account, and how well the program design is implemented. This section discusses the more salient of these design and implementation issues. Annex B presents a translation of the announcement describing the program to applicants, the application itself, and the criteria the board of experts was required to use in its evaluation and ranking of projects.

2.1 The grant-making process.

The size of grants was deliberately kept very small. While an NGO was permitted to apply for additional grants after earlier ones were satisfactorily completed, the maximum size of a “seed grant” for an individual NGO was \$3000 for a project, the duration of which was generally 6-12 months. First-time applicants could receive only \$2000 and many received only “discretionary grants” of up to \$500 which were reserved for startups and to meet immediate needs. Two or more NGOs could apply for a “cooperative grant” that provided up to \$5000 (raised to \$7000 in 1998) if they had already successfully completed other ISAR funded projects. Indeed, the average size of the seed grants provided during the life of this program was just over \$1,700, the smallest was \$100, and only 8 percent received the maximum. Only 12 cooperative grants were awarded and their average size was just over \$5,150. These are substantially smaller than the grants made by ISAR under this same cooperative agreement in Russia. This approach was taken to maximize the number of NGOs that could participate, encourage them to search for other sources of funds and develop joint programs, and to discourage applications from more well-established organizations and from opportunists with non-environmental goals. The offer to fund joint projects was made and thought to be important in this culture because of a traditional reluctance of groups to share information and work together.

It is sometimes argued that small grants maximize citizen participation. Within limits, it surely maximizes the number of NGOs participating, but it does not necessarily maximize the number of volunteers: that depends on the nature of the projects supported. Of course, ISAR could have reached more NGOs by restricting the number of grants an NGO could receive. This was not done because there was no other source of small grants specifically targeted at Eco-NGOs available during this period; in this circumstance, it would have been irresponsible to encourage initiation of an activity and not follow through until the organization had a reasonable chance of surviving without ISAR’s support.

While the application was much simpler than it would have had to be if the grant were larger (for example, no specialized accounting or legal inputs were required), it was more elaborate and formalized than typically found in small grant programs. This too was quite deliberate. Its aim, along with the assistance provided to complete the application, was to teach the applicant how to formulate projects and write proposals. Some told us they had to rewrite their proposals many

times, on the basis of feedback provided by the staff, before ISAR would accept them for submission to the board; many said this rigorous training was crucial in preparing them to compete for larger grants from other organizations.

Applications (other than for discretionary grants) were reviewed several times a year (four times per year at first, three or two time per year later, depending on the amount of money available and number of applications) in clusters of up to 100 in each session. The number of applications funded in each session depended on the budget and number of strong applications available; typically, no more than a third of the applications were funded in a given session. This procedure worked well at first, but it began to appear more and more unfair to newcomers as the number of repeat, and therefore experienced, applicants grew. This could have been handled by restricting the number of grants an NGO could receive; but, as indicated above, that would have penalized more successful NGOs who were still not strong enough to obtain funds from other sources which were, in any case, very limited. Instead, in 1997, ISAR began dividing the funds available into thirds, one third reserved for those who had not received any funds, one third for those who had received less than \$5000, and the remainder for those who had received more than \$5000. This seems to us a good resolution of this problem, so long as there were enough applicants in each category to maintain some degree of competition and the board was rigorous about applying its minimum acceptable standards; but we have no way to know whether the division of the funds into thirds for this purpose was appropriate.

Seed and cooperative grant proposals were considered at the next available board meeting provided the initial submission was made at least two months in advance of the meeting. Funds were made available to successful applicants as soon as they could open a bank account to receive them.¹ Applications for discretionary grants were reviewed by the staff upon receipt and immediately sent to a sub-committee of the board that was given two days to approve or disapprove. The result of these procedures was an average turn-around time for seed and cooperative grant proposals of two months and of discretionary grant proposals of two weeks.

The board of experts consisted of nine persons selected by ISAR for their environmental expertise, regional affiliation, and in-depth knowledge of the NGO environmental movement. They reviewed each application against a specified set of criteria that were incorporated into the questions asked on the application form. After October 1995, no grant could be awarded to an organization with which a board member was affiliated and it became customary for board members to recuse themselves from decisions about applications from any group that might raise questions about conflict of interest. Board members served for a maximum of eight grant rounds with (after the first year) one new member replacing an old member in each round. The result was that service on the board became a substantial training ground for NGO leaders, just as the application process was for newer NGOs.

Grants were provided in two installments, the second given only after satisfactory evidence was available of progress and appropriate use of the funds from the first installment. Likewise, applications for additional funds were accepted only after evidence was provided that the first project was satisfactorily completed and the funds used appropriately. This procedure forced a degree of supervision and accountability that relatively quickly weeded out NGOs whose performance was unsatisfactory. Since grantees were small and well-known within their communities, cessation of funding by ISAR was a clear threat to their reputation and ability to obtain funding from other sources. As a consequence, misuse of funds was a rare occurrence.

¹ This proved to be a major stumbling block for some, and after this requirement began to be enforced, the number of applicants and acceptors declined by a significant number. (See Table 11 and later discussion).

While data are not available to indicate the frequency of this occurrence, Table 8 does indicate that only four percent of projects funded were closed prior to completion.

2.2 Technical Assistance and Other Forms of Support

In the early years, ISAR provided technical assistance only on a one-on-one basis. A potential applicant would talk out his or her idea with a staff member until it crystallized into a reasonable plan; the staff member would then help the applicant understand how to complete the application and would make him/herself available by telephone for further consultations as needed. If the grant was rejected, staff explained the reasons and encouraged the applicant to correct the problem and try again. This time-consuming, labor-intensive method of mentoring and training was applied because of ISAR's determination to maximize the number of grants provided to applicants from outside major cities. These applicants had neither the time nor the money to attend training sessions away from home and often needed this intensive level of assistance when applying for the first time. One-on-one assistance continued during project implementation, for example, to help NGOs understand how to set up and use the internet and how to keep proper financial records.

In the last two years, ISAR supplemented these efforts by conducting several training workshops with Ednannia, its sister organization (discussed below) and other local NGOs. These included one workshop on taxation and financial accounting, one on how to work effectively with the mass media, and nine regional workshops on leadership and team building. One-on-one assistance is still believed to be indispensable for many NGOs, however.

These efforts have been supplemented by other support measures, including:

- **Training:** Beginning in late 1997, ISAR began providing formal training to groups of NGO representatives in Ukraine. In 1998, it conducted, jointly with **EcoPravo-Kyiv**, a national workshop on financial and taxation matters for non-profit organizations. Together with its Ukrainian sister organization, Ednannia, ISAR conducted a seminar on working with the mass media and nine regional seminars on leadership and team-building.
- **Internet Connection and Assistance:** ISAR utilized administrative monies to purchase modems for numerous organizations. These organizations were also provided with one-on-one training, often in their headquarters, on use of the internet and assistance in identifying and negotiating rates with internet providers.
- **Monthly Bulletin:** Since 1995, ISAR has produced and freely distributed a bulletin that includes, among other things, information about upcoming events, grant and fellowship opportunities, new information resources (such as books, internet sites and listserves), and notices by NGOs of their activities, services and resources. More than 1000 copies are distributed by mail each month, in addition to its being made available electronically. The bulletin has become the primary source of information for Eco-NGOs throughout the West NIS. It appears to be widely used and appreciated not only in the NGO community, but among donor and government organizations. One Ukrainian NGO leader described the ISAR bulletin as "part of the environmental movement here."
- **Databases:** ISAR maintains an up-to-date, computerized, database of NGOs working on environmental issues in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova that includes a description of their activities/areas of interest, plus a detailed project database. The maintenance of these

databases requires continuous interaction with NGOs across the country and has resulted in ISAR staff becoming very knowledgeable about individuals and organizations in this field. These databases have been used for a variety of reporting and networking purposes. ISAR's staff has received numerous requests from government and donor agencies for information and judgements about various NGOs.

- **NGO Directory:** A directory of Eco-NGOs that includes information on their activities has been derived from these databases and published in 1995 and 1996 in Russian and English. ISAR is currently seeking funding to publish an updated and expanded version. This is the only such directory available in West NIS, listing both NGOs that have officially registered and those that have not, but are nonetheless active in the environmental movement. Members of NGOs and government officials working on environmental committees cited the directory of environmental NGOs as an invaluable resource. Among other things, it has been important in promoting networking amongst NGOs.
- **Assistance in Seeking Funds:** ISAR has a database and numerous directories of foundations and uses this information to help NGOs in West NIS identify other potential funders for their activities.
- **NGO Success Stories:** In 1998, ISAR published a collection of NGO stories, titled *Travels Along the Horizon*, providing examples of successful ISAR-sponsored projects. Each story provides information about how an organization took action to address a problem, and examines what made their project successful.
- **Publications and Library Facilities:** ISAR has translated, published and distributed books and articles on environmental and NGO issues. Because of its connections throughout the region, other organizations have often used ISAR to distribute their literature. In addition, ISAR maintains a library of books, videos and other materials that is open to the general public.

2.3 Reporting and Evaluation

ISAR has been more conscientious than many USAID contractors in the reporting it demands of its grantees and of itself. Detailed financial and narrative reports were required at the end of each installment and each grant; new installments and grants could not begin before these reports were accepted. ISAR then reported to USAID quarterly. Among other things, these reports include efforts to quantify a set of six "impacts" suggested by USAID. In the last two years, ISAR began reporting on three additional items to capture sustainability issues, which were not included in the initial six impact indicators. In section 3, we use these nine items as criteria for assessing this program.

While these reports are useful as descriptions of the activities under way, they do not provide an adequate basis on which to evaluate these activities. Most of the reporting on "impacts" is self-reporting by grantees. They were asked, for example, if their activities involved the mass media and if so to describe what they did. The number of NGOs reporting activities in this area were then added up and reported. Often, NGOs would report their activities under several categories; for example, education programs for children might be reported under impact on public awareness and under environmental impact, the latter because the NGO believed this to be the ultimate purpose of the education program. In later years, ISAR began to correct these project descriptions when it believed them to be misclassified. But it did not attempt its own assessment of the value or likely impact of these projects. It would have been useful for making decisions on

future projects if, for example, the staff (and perhaps on a sample basis the advisory board as well) had assessed (maybe on a scale of 1 to 5) project outcomes on a few dimensions—perhaps overall value for achieving environmental objectives, overall value for achieving democracy-building objectives, extent of its “multiplier effects”, and likelihood that the progress made will continue. This would have provided the basis for being a bit more proactive in the selection of projects. Admittedly, such judgements would be based on the impressions of knowledgeable observers rather than objective evidence, but to gather the latter would not have been possible without a substantial research budget.

It should be noted that ISAR staff reacted to the suggestion that they might have been more proactive in the selection of projects by noting that on three occasions they announced unscheduled grant rounds on specific topics as a way to encourage more work in these directions. On the 10th anniversary of Chernobyl, they held a grant round on energy conservation. To assist in preparations for the Aarhus Conference, ISAR invited NGOs to prepare papers discussing the way their local governments might become involved in implementation of some of the agenda issues and arranged for these papers to be presented in one of the conference sessions (one particularly useful paper was a comparative review of legislation concerning public access to environmental information and public participation in decision-making). The third unscheduled grant round was reserved for projects to be implemented by several NGOs collectively, the goal being to encourage networking. These are excellent examples of cases where ISAR took the initiative to encourage work on high priority areas where NGOs were not inclined to be very active. The suggestion made above might provide ISAR with a basis selecting additional topics for such special treatment.

2.4 Staff, Mode and Style of Operation.

ISAR-West NIS operates more like a local NGO on a tight budget than like a foreign contractor to USAID. Since 1995, all staff have been Ukrainian nationals except for one American who serves as information coordinator, salaries are locally competitive, and quarters are Spartan (adequate computers, copiers and faxes, but only one telephone line and three small rooms plus a kitchen for 6-10 people). This has made it possible to keep overheads to a minimum and resulted in a grant to total budget ratio of 60% for the ISAR-West NIS office and 50% if the ISAR-DC expenses allocated to the cooperative agreement are included (see Table 1). It has also helped to overcome suspicions on the part of the NGO community about where loyalties lay. On the other hand, according to USAID officials, ISAR-West NIS has also managed to represent USAID fairly, a balancing act that is difficult to achieve.

The staff, currently consisting of nine full time and a number of part time contractors (used, for example, for training), are highly trained, experienced, and hard-working. Three have Ph.Ds, four have masters degrees, the others have bachelors degrees or the equivalent. Their fields of specialization cover biology, environmental chemistry, education and training, economics, engineering and sociology. All but one have been involved in work for ISAR or related Eco-NGOs since the early period of this program.

2.5 Net Result.

The net result is an organization that appears to have won everyone’s respect. NGO representatives told us how grateful they are for the fund-raising and management skills they acquired by working with ISAR; how strict, competent and fair the grant screening process has been; and how open and helpful the staff has been even when they turn down a proposal. Some

told us that winning an ISAR grant has made them more respected in the eyes of the government and other donors. Government and donors confirmed this and went on to say that they often seek information and advice from the ISAR staff because they trust that it will be informed, honest and balanced. Indeed, the notion of balance came up several times: balanced in representing NGOs' interests to USAID, in representing USAID's interest to the NGOs, and in keeping in mind broader social goals such as the need to provide employment along with protection of the environment.

We received very few negative comments and most of them seemed somewhat self-serving. For example, a couple of people from larger, more well-established organizations suggested that ISAR's grants should have been larger and targeted to more established organizations, and a couple NGOs suggested that ISAR favored some regions and organizations over others. But such comments were few and far between.

In this section, we have gone into some detail to describe ISAR's procedures and mode of operation because we believe it probably represents best practice in the management of small grant programs. It is, however, an extremely labor-intensive approach. ISAR clearly believes that this level of input and detail is what it takes in West NIS to overcome resistance to public participation and to develop a sustainable and growing NGO movement. Is this a correct judgement? The first and most important step in answering this question is to ask how much these efforts achieved. This is the topic of the next section.

3. PROGRAM OUTPUTS, IMPACTS AND SUSTAINABILITY

It is useful to discuss the achievements of this program in three parts: **outputs** (number of NGOs receiving grants, the number and size of grants, etc.), **“impacts”** (activities aimed at a particular target, for example, to influence the media or to clean up a toxic waste site), and **sustainability** (prospects for continuation of these activities in the absence of additional small grants).

3.1 Outputs

This section presents data on the number of NGOs receiving grants, the number and size of grants, the distribution of projects by subject matter, and a number of special breakdowns of these figures. Unless otherwise specified, only totals for the three West NIS countries are presented here. In general the qualitative conclusions derived from these data are the same as those that can be derived from data for Ukraine since the bulk – 75% – of the grants were provided to NGOs in this country. Data for each of the countries and additional breakdowns are included in Annex B.

Number of Eco-NGOs and ISAR’s involvement with them. It is difficult to get an accurate figure for the number of NGOs. Registration can take place at the center or in local towns, and many are not registered. It is commonly agreed that ISAR-West NIS’s database is the most comprehensive available (it may not, however, include every organization and may have failed to weed out some that have ceased to exist). The latest figures are given in Table 3, from which we can see that:

- ISAR has 830 Eco-NGOs in its database (619 in Ukraine). These are organizations that existed at some time during ISAR’s operation. Of these, 574 are currently in existence in the West NIS.
- 62% of the 830 submitted applications to ISAR, and
- 35% were supported with one or more grants.
- Thus, about 57% of those submitting proposals were funded.

It would be interesting to know to what extent ISAR was responsible for the growth of the Eco-NGO community. Unfortunately, available data do not permit us to answer this question. All that can be said is that ISAR provided grants to 291 organizations during a period when 389 new Eco-NGOs were established (Tables 3 and 10). But we do not know how many of these grants went to this set of startups.

Grants. Table 4 presents data on the number of grant applications submitted and approved. Table 5 presents data on NGOs by the number and amount of grants received. From these data, we can conclude that:

- 960 applications, amounting to \$2,366,000, for **seed and cooperative grants** were submitted to ISAR. 41% of these applications—31% of the funds requested—were approved.
- 376 **discretionary grants** were awarded. This constitutes almost 50% of the total awards but only 16% of the total funds provided. This figure is well within the limit of 20% for discretionary grants authorized by USAID.

- Nearly half the grantees received only one grant. Sixteen percent received more than four grants. More than one-fourth (27%) received \$500 or less while 16% received more than \$5000, cumulatively. The average total amount received by any given NGO was just over \$3000.

Geographic Distribution of Grants. Seed grants were provided on the basis of competition. But ISAR tried to encourage applications from areas outside the capitals and to be fair to the three countries. To what extent did they succeed? Tables 6 and 7 compare submissions and awards in the capital and the provinces of each country. They indicate that:

- In the first year of the program, 80% of applications in Ukraine and all the applications in Belarus and Moldova came from the capitals. This bias was slowly corrected, quite substantially in Ukraine and Belarus, but only modestly in Moldova. By 1998, only 40% of grants in Ukraine, 55% in Belarus, and 65% in Moldova were awarded to NGOs in the capital.
- The percentage of project applications that resulted in grants was relatively equal among the three countries. On average, in the West NIS 41% of grants were approved. Thirty-eight percent of applications in Ukraine were successful, 50% in Moldova, and 49% in Belarus. The lower percentage of successful applicants in Ukraine reflects the significantly higher number of applications (704 compared to 138 in Belarus and 118 in Moldova).
- On a per capita basis, Moldova received twice as many seed grants and three times the amount of funds for seed grants as did Ukraine. Belarus received modestly more in terms of numbers and 30% more in terms of dollars. This could be the result of the same small-country bias that is observed in the distribution of ODA funds between countries.
- No such bias was observed in the case of discretionary grants. For some reason, Belarus received fewer than its per capita share. As a percent of total grants, discretionary grants in Ukraine were substantially higher and Moldova lower than the average for the three countries. This is what one might expect given the greater ease that Ukrainian NGOs have to demonstrate their need for special consideration.

Disposition of Grants and Projects. Projects that were approved were sometimes not started, for example, because the NGO could not establish a bank account to receive the funds; and projects that were initiated were sometimes not completed either because the NGO or ISAR called a halt to the project before work was completed. Table 8 provides a picture of such situations. As can be seen:

- Of the projects approved for funding, less than one percent was not started and about three percent were closed before completion. This is quite a respectable failure rate for small grant programs.

Projects by Category. Table 9 provides a percent distribution of projects by category. While projects can be found in all categories, more than a third fall in the general category of public awareness and another fifth can be classified as NGO development.

3.2 Impacts.

The sections that follow outline the impact of ISAR's program, based on the initial impact criteria developed by USAID. As recommended in the 1994 mid-term evaluation, ISAR worked closely with USAID to gather data on six impact indicators: public awareness and participation, media interest, encouraging government involvement and support, environmental improvements, environmental policy and NGO legislation, and NGO network building. In 1997, ISAR expanded this list to include three new indicators on sustainability. These additional indicators are discussed in section 3.3.

ISAR went to considerable lengths to adopt and track these indicators. Each NGO seeking a grant was required to outline the potential impact of its project in each of these areas and to report on the extent to which these targets were achieved in its end-of-project report. This information was entered into the database, summarized by adding up the number of times a particular impact was identified, and reported to USAID on a quarterly basis. Tables 11 A-D provide a summary by years for the West NIS and each country. ISAR saw this focus on impacts, not only as an evaluation tool for itself and USAID, but as part of a learning process for the NGOs, to keep them focused on the reasons for awarding them the grant and to help them realize how much, or little, they have accomplished. Recognition of the scope of their successes also encouraged NGOs to pursue other projects.

3.2.1 Public Awareness and Participation. Public opinion polls have shown that people are generally aware of environmental problems, but, except when faced with an acute emergency, do not place them high on their list of immediate concerns. According to Socis-Gallop, which conducts a monthly Omnibus survey of public opinion in Ukraine, when asked to list their most pressing problems, citizens cite as their first concern their material status, followed by their personal security, and then their or their family's health. Environmental issues, despite their relationship to health problems, tend to fall in seventh or eighth place. Part of the reason for this is that so much of the average person's time and energy is taken up with making ends meet. Another reason, as many people interviewed indicated, is that most environmental problems appear to be overwhelming, leaving people with a feeling that there is nothing they can do about them. This state of affairs led ISAR to give high priority to the objectives of expanding citizen awareness and participation—attempting to demonstrate in practical ways that citizens acting together can make a difference.

One approach has been to use pollution monitoring and publication of results to generate awareness and participation. A case in point is **AGROECO**, an Eco-NGO in Moldova that received a grant to monitor water quality. Participants traced poor quality drinking water to polluted underground water sources in six regions throughout the Ruit River basin. Villagers were present as their well water was examined, and monitors explained the effect of farming and sanitation processes on water quality. AGROECO presented the results of these investigations at over 30 town meetings and at five round tables with government representatives and the mass media. At each meeting, AGROECO distributed leaflets with information about the connection between drinking water quality and people's health and informed local community members of simple methods to protect their wells from pollutants. Approximately 1,200 people took part in the project including children, students, women and pensioners. Information appeared about the monitoring efforts in several Moldovan newspapers as well as over radio and television. As a result of this project, residents of seven villages decided to take measures to improve and protect their water quality through the creation of "Green Patrols." Follow-up tests demonstrated a dramatic reduction in water pollution.

Other ISAR grantees sought to increase public participation by enabling citizens to report their concerns about the environment. For example, **Deti Mira** (Children of the World) received a grant from ISAR to organize an Environmental Help Line to provide the public with information about local environmental groups, experts and services. Through the course of the project, over 500 callers from all segments of society requested information, taking that first, important step toward addressing their concerns. After the Kyiv television program “Your Health” held an interview with the coordinator of the project in May 1998, the City Park Services provided the Help Line with a database of government structures. Deti Mira has begun to work with two other Kyiv NGOs to expand these telephone services to provide information about environmental law.

Both ISAR and its grantees saw work with children and youth as an important way to ensure that the next generation takes greater care of the environment and does not repeat the mistakes of the past. The **Environmental Education Association** received a grant from ISAR to conduct a project aimed at increasing the awareness of school children and youth about the environment. The children submitted poems and drawings on environmental themes, the best of which were included in an environmental calendar. The Environmental Education Association then distributed 850 of these Eco-calendars to students, industries, government agencies, and environmental NGOs throughout Ukraine. Several exhibitions and presentations of the children’s work took place in local schools and regional governing offices. The city has added this competition to its environmental program and the local government has decreed a special holiday, to be celebrated on International Earth Day, as a “Day of Children’s Art.”

ISAR grantees also found citizens’ participation to have positive social benefits. For instance, **Gaia**, a children’s environmental club of Pridneprovskoe, received three small grants from ISAR to involve local teenagers in expeditions and monitoring activities. Participants saw tangible results from their efforts. For example, officials fined local cooperative farms for violating environmental standards and the regional executive committee formed three commissions on Land, Air and Water. Many of the youth participating in the projects were at-risk teens who used drugs and alcohol. Their involvement in the club, and the attention given to them by Gaia’s director, helped them give up their abusive habits and instead turn their interests to hiking, camping, and environmental clean-ups.. These teens have tried to help their friends overcome such problems by encouraging them to participate in the club’s activities.

Overall, representatives from environmental NGO reported in interviews that they were surprised by the willingness of citizens to participate in activities and to voice their concerns through mechanisms such as petitions. They also reported that ISAR grants enabled many of them to greatly increase the scope of their projects. For example, prior to receiving a grant from ISAR, **UNION**, an organization that holds environmental seminars for children, had to limit attendance to 7-10 students. They used a grant from ISAR to extend these seminars to as many as 70 students.

To track citizen participation, ISAR-supported NGOs provided detailed reports on the number of people participating in their activities – which ranged from two to 15,000. In all, ISAR estimates that as many as 110,000 people were actively involved in the various projects in the West NIS, with approximately 100,000 of those participants in Ukraine.

Methods of increasing awareness included seminars, press conferences, and distribution of information through e-mail listserve and circulation of bulletins. NGOs also produced programs and documentary films on environmental issues, some of which were shown on national television reaching as many as 2.5 million viewers. Public festivals also proved to be a good

vehicle for increasing citizen awareness. For example, with a grant from ISAR, the **Youth Environment League of Predniprovyia** organized the first non-government, unofficial festival in Dnipropetrovsk . The festival, which went on for three days, combined music with information on environmental issues and law. Videos and films about the children of Chernobyl were shown. In addition, the local authorities spoke about environmental problems in the region. At least 800 people attended the festival.

A final example of an organization that has successfully combined a variety of these techniques is **Mama-86**. Following the Chernobyl catastrophe in 1986, a group of concerned mothers came together to address the needs of local children affected by harmful radiation from the explosion. Mama-86 was established in 1990 to expand these efforts, educate parents about the hazards their children face, and attract public attention to Kyiv's environmental problems. The organization promotes environmental awareness through an eco-hotline and, with support from ISAR, has implemented five projects related to women, ecology and health. Mama-86 has also created an all-Ukrainian network of NGOs working on similar issues and is active internationally. It is currently working on the project "Drinkable Water." With support from UNED-UK, a British NGO, "Drinkable Water" became a component of the 1998 sessions of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development and of preparations for the World Health Organization's Third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health to be held in London in June 1999. Mama-86 also implemented a project on public participation in writing the National Environmental Health Action Plan (NEHAP) in Ukraine. As part of this project, Mama-86, in coalition with other strong NGOs in Ukraine, led a public consultation throughout Ukraine, in order to gather opinions of environmental health NGOs, scientists, business representatives, government officials and interested citizens.

Nearly all grantees included some effort to increase public awareness and participation – from 100% (13 projects) in 1993 to 86% (48 out of 56 projects) in 1998-9. Throughout the period of implementation of this seed grant program, 95% of projects reported an impact in either public participation or awareness (the database does not distinguish between efforts to increase public awareness and efforts to increase public participation). Results in this category are higher than in the other impact areas, reflecting the emphasis placed by both ISAR and its grantees on this area.

3.2.2 Media interest. A motto at the core of ISAR's approach to the small grants program was "small project – big resonance." To increase resonance, ISAR encouraged NGOs to inform the media of their activities and to send it copies of all coverage. In addition, and more significantly, ISAR funded projects aimed directly at developing media interest and capacity to cover environmental issues and report on citizens' efforts to deal with these issues.

A particularly striking case is that of *Natura*, a newspaper in Moldova. With support from ISAR, a group of journalists, alarmed at the lack of public interest in the environment, established their own newspaper for distribution throughout Moldova. Since then, *Natura* has become an important source of environmental information and created a watchdog mindset in the public. After initially receiving five grants from ISAR, the newspaper has gone on to find its own sources of funding. It currently has over 1,000 subscribers and distributes thousands of newspapers for free to schools, libraries, governmental agencies and foreign embassies. Building on its initial support from ISAR, *Natura* has expanded its reporting and works not only to raise environmental awareness, but also to mobilize citizens to act to ensure a better environment.

A Moldovan NGO, **Gutta**, used funding from ISAR to publish an environmental newspaper for children. Young adults were given an opportunity to write articles on environmental topics that concern them and some of their reports were reprinted in mainstream newspapers. ISAR grants

also supported *Green World* in Ukraine and *Ecology and Health* in Dnipropetrovsk. In total, ISAR funding assisted in the publication of seven journals, eight newspapers, 31 books, 15 booklets and a number of bulletins, calendars, and brochures. (See Annex C for a complete list of these publications and their print run/circulation).

ISAR also provided funding to **Green Dossier Publishing/Information Center**, an organization that collects and distributes environmental information, trains environmental journalists, and helps NGOs publicize their activities. Green Dossier has played an important role in encouraging better ties between NGOs and the mass media. With grants from ISAR, Green Dossier organized a conference on the Internet and preparation and dissemination of environmental information through the mass media and a round table that brought NGOs and journalists together. The round table resulted in the publication of a booklet advising NGOs on their relations with the mass media. Green Dossier has established a formal environmental informational center and sends out a weekly press release covering environmental events over the wires to over 100 publications and broadcasting centers in Ukraine.

Other organizations used funding from ISAR to create video programs and documentary films. **Varnyak Environmental Society** used an ISAR grant to produce a series of 47 television shows called "Environmental Messenger." These reports on environmental issues, interviews, and round table discussions aired on the local television station, which has a viewing audience of more than 150,000 people. The Varnyak Society also produced a 25-minute film called "Western Donbas on the Threshold of Catastrophe," which was also shown to viewers in the region. In addition to these programs, members of the Varnyak Society wrote 46 articles for the paper *Western Donbas*, which has a circulation of 7000. To assess the impact of these activities, a local survey found that 62% of the people knew about the television show and 51% had seen the newspaper articles. As a consequence of these media efforts, community members began to report violations of environmental laws to the NGO, which conducted spot checks of those violations. Moreover, coverage of environmental issues in the local press has continued. *Western Donbas* initiated a column for readers to write in with questions about the environment and the local television station began producing the show "Our TV Viewers Blowing the Whistle."

Other media-related projects focused on specific threats to the environment. The **National EcoCenter of Ukraine**, for example, sought to inform the public about the problems associated with the construction of a hydro-electric station. With a discretionary grant from ISAR, EcoCenter produced a film about the station's construction, which would permanently flood a regional park famous for its spectacular granite and steppe landscape. The film was shown on Ukrainian national television in August 1998, at a seminar on environmental politics in the Vinitstkaya region in September, and to over 65,000 viewers at the Kyiv festival "Red Ruta" in October. After the film appeared on television, the government conducted a second environmental impact assessment of the proposed station, this time – thanks to the pressure generated by EcoCenter – with public participation. The second assessment concluded that the station should not be built. In addition, the Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Natural and Historical Monuments nominated the regional park as an UNESCO natural heritage site. Because of economic concerns, the government is nonetheless still considering plans to build the station. EcoCenter has continued to battle against the construction, publishing articles and drawing attention to this issue.

An impressive example of the power of small grants and the impact of media coverage is provided by the activities of **Citizens Watch-Nikopol**, a small NGO located in the Dnipropetrovsk oblast. In 1998, residents of Nikopol began to observe cattle with deteriorating hoofs. Investigations disclosed that these cattle had wandered into an area that had been fenced

off for many years. With a \$500 grant from ISAR, Citizens Watch began testing water samples in the area and eventually uncovered an underground lake heavily polluted with Cesium 157 dumped there by a secret military factory that operated from 1963 to 1983. Even local authorities did not know of the existence of this factory. The information reported by Citizens Watch received wide coverage in both the local and national press and television. Local officials have responded by repairing fences around the area and by initiating a regular monitoring program. National officials have begun to investigate. But the problem remains and may be getting worse: subsequent monitoring has raised concerns that the underground lake may be expanding and moving towards the village water supply.

Three observations can be made about ISAR's attempts to involve mass media. First, judging from the percent of projects reporting involvement with the media, they have certainly been successful. ISAR's database indicates that between 1993 and 1997, the percent of projects reporting media involvement increased from 15% (2 out of 13) to 83% (69 out of 83). This percentage fell somewhat in 1989-99, to 70% (39 out of 56 projects) but remains high. It is not clear whether this decline reflects a change in the nature of the projects or increasing difficulty in getting information into the mass media.

Second, getting media coverage in smaller towns has proved to be relatively easy. Almost any activity organized by a local NGO attracts attention in a small community. But third, the situation is very different in larger cities and not only because Eco-NGOs are faced with more competition for media attention. Major newspapers and TV stations seem to be reluctant to publicize actions or groups that might irritate powerful interest groups. The leader of **EcoPravo-Kyiv**, an NGO that provides pro-bono legal services on environmental problems, for example, indicated that few newspapers are willing to report on their successes in winning compensation from government agencies or businesses for fear that they would encourage others to come forward and sue as well. Another example comes from an NGO in Dnipropetrovsk that found that leakage from the city sewer system had caused a landslide. The press refused to publish the NGOs findings and instead reported that the landslide was caused by a natural disaster.

Such examples illustrate the difficulties that NGOs have in trying to act as 'whistle-blowers' and to get their stories told. But we have also provided examples of cases where NGOs have received substantial favorable press. Such disparate examples are to be expected in a society that is slowly becoming more open. They serve to illustrate the importance and need to continue the line of work that ISAR's grants have encouraged.

3.2.3 Encouraging Government Involvement and Support. Increased cooperation between NGOs and government officials was another important outcome encouraged by ISAR. The impact of the Soviet legacy on citizens' relationships with the government has been twofold. On the one hand, many citizens have continued to look to the government to solve all of their problems and do not consider steps that they themselves could take. On the other hand, for those citizens who have chose to assume a more active role, many have taken a confrontational approach toward government officials. As a result, government officials and NGOs view each other with suspicion and often fail to see the potential for positive results through cooperation.

The head of the environmental committee of the Kyiv city council referred to the resulting tension by noting that "if NGOs want the government to change its ways, they need to change their approach to government. They should not only see themselves as performing a control function, acting as a censor or critic, but they also need to start actively participating in the development of policy." He also stressed, "deputies are not the people they used to be. They are elected and have made promises to the public in their campaigns, many of which focus on

environmental issues. But they often don't know how to solve these problems. They need help coming up with practical, affordable, solutions."

Many of the projects undertaken by ISAR grantees have sought to include government officials. Representatives from local or national government or from environmental ministries have been encouraged to present their perspective at meetings. In other instances, government officials have been invited to participate directly in project development and implementation.

For example, **Gaia**, a children's environmental club of Pridneprovskoe, received a discretionary grant to organize environmental camps to monitor small rivers in the region. Representatives from the Cherkaska Oblast Department of Water Resources and Management and from the Committee for Environmental Protection were among the 147 participants in the project. In addition to taking part in the project, the Department of Water Resources gave Gaia access to information, allowed the use of their base for the environmental camps, provided a bus, and made funds available to purchase expedition equipment. The Institute of Hydrology analyzed water samples taken during the expeditions free of charge. Seeing the positive influence of the project on the community's youth, the local council offered renovate Gaia's quarters and to cover the organization's electricity, transport and mail expenses. Such support will help to ensure the sustainability of their activities.

In addition to attracting the involvement and participation of government officials, many ISAR grantees have gone on to play a more active role in the political process. For example, Victor Khazan of **Green World-Dnipropetrovsk**, an ISAR board member, is a leader of the Green Party in Ukraine and a consultant for the head of the Parliamentary Committee on Environment. Svetlana Kravchenko of **EcoPravo-Lviv**, another member of ISAR's board, works with the parliaments of Ukraine and other countries on issues relating to environment. She is also active on issues related to public participation in environmental decision-making. Anna Golobovskaya-Onisomova of **Mama-86** has contributed to government programs, including the National Environmental Health Action Plan of Ukraine.

Other ISAR grantees have been active at the local level. For example, Elena Yavorska of **Green World-Podillya**, a member of the ISAR board, was chosen to head the Department of Environment for the Vinnytska Oblast as a result of her work with the environmental movement. Vyacheslav Sandul of **Green World-Nikopol** is a member of the city council and heads the council's Environmental Commission. Alexander Bagin of **Green Movement of Donbas**, another ISAR grantee and former board member, is a member of the regional NGO council for the Department of the Environment.

According to the ISAR database, the percent of projects involving government increased steadily, from 31% (4 out of 13 projects) in 1993 to 68% (38 out of 56) in 1998-99. Most of this involvement has been at the local level. Just as in the case of the media, NGO influence at the national level has been limited. These figures also include projects that have involved commercial and academic organizations, and the number of such projects has grown in recent years. Now that these organizations have gained a degree of independence from the government, it would be useful to record involvement with them separately.

3.2.4 Environmental Improvements. End-of-project reports provide a long list of environmental improvements. Activities involving clean-up, tree planting, water purification, the promotion of rational land use, blockage of construction of an oil terminal that would have been environmentally damaging, and persuading a thermal power plant to reduce emissions are all cases in point. Some of the more significant achievements are described below.

With a grant from ISAR, the **Stalkir Explorer Environmental Club** undertook a project to improve the banks of the Dniester River. Working with local experts from the Department of Water Resources for the Dniester River Basin, they mapped the most polluted areas of the shores. Based on recommendations by these experts, members of Stalkir identified hotspots where they would conduct their activities. Over 270 adults and children participated in the clean-ups of the river bank in these hotspots and along tributaries feeding the Dniester River. In the area of the bank identified by the experts as prone to erosion, they planted over 2,000 trees in a nine-kilometer stretch to strengthen the river banks.

The Moldovan organization **Tabiekom** received funding from ISAR in 1996 to establish a "Mini-Nature Reserve" in the Stinka forest. Portions of this forest were being clear-cut, resulting in the loss of endangered flora and fauna. In addition, farms in the region were dumping their wastes into the Dniester River, which flows through the forest and serves as the major source of drinking water for Moldova. As a result of the project, Tabiekom was able to establish a nature reserve (800 hectares), which has protected status. Farms located within the reserve were forced to stop dumping their wastes into the river, and the clear-cutting in this ancient forest was halted.

Most of the activities reported under this heading involve efforts by NGOs and local citizens to make a change in their environment. There were also a number of cases of NGOs attempting to persuade others with more resources—most notably the government and local businesses—to undertake such actions. We report on one particularly striking case here. In the 1970s, the Soviet government built a dam in the Sassyk estuary. The water behind the dam became highly salinized and stagnant, accumulating agricultural run-off and household and industrial waste. Attempts to use the water for irrigation transformed 75,000 acres of rich farmland into sterile wasteland within a few years. Life expectancy and fertility in the region fell, the number of children with birth defects increased, and an entire ecosystem began to disappear. These problems were brought to the attention of the head inspector for the Ministry for Environmental Protection, who sought to take action. She was subsequently forced out of her government position and eventually joined with a group of local doctors and community members to form **Vozrozhdeniye** in 1996. With a grant from ISAR, Vozrozhdeniye conducted a survey that found that 97% of the 5,000 residents supported removing the dam enclosing the Sassyk. They then completed a scientific investigation of the water, soil and other ecological conditions in the area. The resulting study received widespread media coverage and led to a proposal by the World Wildlife Fund to finance the removal of the dam. The government is seriously considering this proposal.

ISAR did not require all projects to have an environmental impact. There were two reasons for this. First, as noted above, there was a heavy emphasis on developing public awareness and participation. Second, many of the environmental problems identified by NGOs require the actions of others (most notably, private businesses or government agencies) and/or more significant amounts of funds to correct than ISAR had at its disposal. As a consequence, the percent of projects reporting environment impacts was lower than for other categories. The average over the whole period, 1993-1999, was 38% (264 out of 694 projects) and the highest level was reported in 1997 (42% of 83 projects).

3.2.5 Environmental Policy and NGO Legislation. As noted above, where possible ISAR grantees involved government officials in their projects. Active participation to formulate and influence key policy decisions is the next step. ISAR has supported several projects that have attempted to do this.

Some NGOs attempted to obtain compensation for victims of harmful environmental practices. For example, a grant by ISAR to the Dnipropetrovsk **Zeleni Svit** allowed the group to investigate and write a detailed report on the grave effects of uranium mining on the residents of the town of Zhovti Vody. Convinced by the report, the federal government, which for years had ignored petitions from the citizens of the area, acknowledged the problem, offered compensation to affected residents, and considered possible changes in the mining process.

Other NGOs managed to convince government authorities to adopt decisions that ensure the protection of unique environmental areas. For example, the **Club of Young Ecologists “Kudesnik”** organized a project to preserve the unique natural landscape and the biodiversity on the right bank of the Aidar River. They conducted a survey of the riverbank, collecting samples for research. In the process, they identified several endangered species of plants and discovered an area where within one kilometer river, forest, marshland, steppe, and mountains could be seen. Based on this survey, they proposed the creation of a nature reserve along the riverbank between the towns of Novopskov and Schaste. To implement this project, Kudesnik researched the law on establishing a nature reserve and worked closely with the Sverodonetsk branch of Zeleni Svit and authorities at the local and regional levels. Since the state’s budget could not cover another reserve, the club proposed the creation of a “natural botanical monument” as a less costly alternative. In September 1998, the oblast authorities established the Spevakovka Natural Botanical Monument, the first protected area in the oblast.

ISAR-supported newspapers also served as an important mechanism to influence policy. For instance, *Natura*, which appeared monthly with the support of grants from ISAR, uncovered a proposal by the government to sell logging rights to 6,000 hectares of land in one of Moldova’s remaining forests to a foreign company. Information about this sale was not made public until *Natura’s* report in June 1995, and for several months afterwards, *Natura* was threatened with closure. Due to the enormous public pressure that was generated by *Natura*, including a public appeal through letters and petitions, the sale was officially called off in November 1995. In a television address, the President of Moldova thanked the newspaper for alerting the public to the threat. *Natura* has continued to influence environmental policy, lobbying successfully for the adoption of two laws, “On Protection of Wild Animals” and “On Protection of Moldova’s Water Zones.” *Natura* also actively participated in the development of the National Environmental Program, which will be effective in Moldova until 2020. Its editor authored the chapter of the program on the NGO sector.

The West NIS projects approved for “Road to Aarhus” grants (funded by the Regional Environmental Center in Budapest) also made important contributions to environmental policy. **EcoPravo-Lviv** worked with a group of NGOs to study the legislation and practices of public participation in environmental decision-making in five NIS countries (Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Moldova and Kazakhstan) and to make recommendations on how to improve legislation. **Citizen Initiative—OGI International** (Ukraine) undertook a project to increase public participation in the development of National Environment Action Plans in Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Moldova and Kazakhstan. **Biotica** proposed legislation “On Access to Environmental Information” that was adopted as a template for all NIS countries. Biotica’s report on public participation in Moldova’s environmental decision-making was distributed at the Aarhus Conference.

In addition, with the help of ISAR’s consultant in Belarus, in early 1998, Belarusian NGOs held an unprecedented roundtable to discuss the Aarhus Convention. The meeting gathered representatives of environmental NGOs, independent experts, government officials and journalists to discuss the availability of environmental information and ways to increase public participation in environmental decision-making. As a result, Belarusian NGOs and the Ministry

of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection agreed to work together to develop procedures for public access to environmental information within the Ministry's jurisdictions. Although Belarus had previously shown no intention of ratifying the Convention, all participants agreed that ratification would be an important step forward for Belarus.

Finally, it should be pointed out that ISAR itself made an important contribution in this area. Efforts by ISAR led to a change in NGO banking policy at the National Bank of Ukraine that enabled Western funders to transfer grants to nonprofit organizations in the Ukrainian currency rather than in dollars. Prior to this, Ukrainian NGOs had to open expensive hard currency accounts if they wished to be eligible to receive foreign grants. ISAR's financial manager spent eight months corresponding with the Bank of Ukraine to convince it to change these regulations.

The percentage of projects focused on environmental policy increased from 11% (1 out of 9) in 1993 to 43% (19 out of 44) in 1997-8. In all, 190 out of 527 projects – 36% – reported an impact on policy. It would appear that Eco-NGOs are in fact beginning to assume a greater advocacy role.

3.2.6 NGO Network Building. In the Soviet system, information was viewed as a source of power and not as something to be shared, particularly with potential rivals for scarce resources. Mistrust and misunderstandings separated groups and individuals. By encouraging NGO network building, ISAR sought to overcome this mindset. Sharing information and experiences enhances the ability of NGOs to be a force for environmental advocacy. Recognizing this, ISAR took several steps to encourage and facilitate networking among NGOs.

Virtually all NGOs described ISAR as playing a key role in NGO networking. The EcoForum, organized by ISAR in 1995, helped establish ties among NGOs by bringing together 250 activists from the US and NIS. One NGO leader described EcoForum 1995 as “the most important event for our organization.” He explained that this Forum helped him understand the role of NGOs, the need for fundraising, and the potential for social action. He added that he has kept in touch with most of the participants that he met at the conference, including representatives from NGOs in other NIS countries and the United States. ISAR's bulletin and NGO directory, discussed in Section 2, were also frequently cited as important to the development of ties among NGOs.

ISAR's leadership in Kyiv also strove to mend rifts in the environmental movement. For example, they helped to smooth over a split in the largest environmental NGO in Ukraine, Green World (**Zeleniy Svit**). When two wings of the organization split over disagreements about participating in the Green Party, ISAR chose to fund both groups and invited the deputy heads of each wing to participate on its board. These actions forced communication and collaboration that eventually healed the breach. In Odesa, ISAR organized a seminar to bring together environmental groups that had previously refused to cooperate with each other. The seminar resulted in the formation of a city-wide coalition to address Odesa's environmental problems.

ISAR also sought to establish partnerships between Ukrainian NGOs and US organizations. One of the most successful of these is the collaboration between **ABA/CEELI** and **EcoPravo**. After funding EcoPravo's initial activities in the field of environmental law, ISAR recommended that ABA/CEELI, which at the time was seeking partners in Ukraine, work with EcoPravo. As a result of this partnership, EcoPravo and ABA/CEELI created the Environmental Public Advocacy Center (EPAC) in Lviv, and subsequently created EPACs in Kyiv and Kharkiv. The work of the EPACs has formed a cornerstone of USAID's Rule of Law strategy (SO 2.2) that seeks to demonstrate to citizens that if their environmental rights can be enforced, so too can other rights. EcoPravo has benefited greatly from this partnership. ABA/CEELI has become EcoPravo's

main funder, has supplied it with literature on environmental laws, assisted with its research on comparative legislation, helped develop a clinic program for law students, arranged for study tours in the US, and funded the participation of US specialists in EcoPravo's seminars. This collaboration has enabled EcoPravo to achieve significant results, including, for example, arguing the first human rights case in a Ukrainian court.

Finally, ISAR offered "cooperative grants" to encourage the development of projects undertaken by groups of NGOs. One such project, implemented by the Ukrainian NGOs **Civil Initiative** and **EcoPravo-Kyiv**, the Belarusian NGO **Belaya Rus**, and the Moldovan NGOs **Natura** and **Aktsiunya Verdi 21**, involved over 140 NGOs in Ukraine and 50 NGOs in Belarus and Moldova. This project sought to include NGOs in the identification of environmental problems and priorities as part of the development of National Environmental Action Plans (NEAPs). At seminars organized to present these findings, participants made recommendations for both the NEAPs and for Local Environmental Action Plans (LEAPs). The Ukrainian Ministry for Environmental Protection and Nuclear Safety used these recommendations in developing the structure for LEAPs.

At their own initiative, NGOs also proposed projects aimed at improving ties with other NGOs. For example, the **Youth Environmental League of Pridneprovie** received two grants to increase the level of information exchange and cooperation among NGOs in the Dnipropetrovsk region. Their activities were an important catalyst for cooperation among NGOs in the region – by bringing NGO representatives together and providing them with a forum to exchange information. The Youth Environmental League also produced and disseminated an electronic monthly digest to NGOs in the region and, with its second grant from ISAR, began to distribute this digest in hard copy to organizations without access to e-mail. In addition, it also organized round tables, training sessions, and workshops for NGOs in the region. One seminar, "NGOs, Problems and Capabilities," focused on the problems facing new NGOs. Another, "Informational and Technical Support of NGOs," promoted information exchange by teaching NGO representatives how to use e-mail. Based on these activities, the Youth Environment League collected and systematized information for a directory of environmental organizations and activists from the Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk regions. Finally, with support from ISAR, the League established an Internet server with which they provide free e-mail access to local environmental NGOs.

ISAR monitored NGO Network Building by tracking the creation of new branches of organizations; the success of efforts to establish and maintain contacts with other NGOs at the local, national, or international levels; and the number and effectiveness of joint projects. Efforts among ISAR grantees to establish and strengthen their ties with other NGOs through their projects remained fairly constant – from 58% of projects in 1993 to 57% in 1998-99, although a significantly larger percent (71%) was reported in 1996.

3.3 Sustainability.

This section asks three questions about the sustainability of environmental NGOs: how many of ISAR's grantees are/are not currently active and what are the reasons for becoming inactive; what has ISAR done to promote sustainability and how effective have these actions been; and what is the likelihood that NGOs currently active will continue in the future?

The closest we can come to answering the first question is to observe that 20 percent of the NGOs that ISAR funded are no longer in existence (see "closed" in Table 10). This compares to 34% of those not receiving ISAR grants and a turnover rate of about 20% for NGOs in Western Europe

and North America. This figure is an overestimate of the extent to which the activities of these NGOs are no longer being undertaken, since there have been a number of name changes (e.g., at the time of registration) and many of their members have joined other organizations or established new organizations with similar goals. Despite these closures, the total number of Eco-NGOs has grown each year, until today there are over 570 in existence.

Most often closure occurs because the leader of the organization ceased to perform that role and no one else was available to take over. In addition, however, especially in Ukraine, many organizations were established for a specific event—the “Walk for Mother Earth” is a case in point—and were disbanded thereafter. Such single purpose initiative groups were not identified as such in the database. A third factor, which explains many of the closings in Belarus, is a change for the worse in the political environment facing NGOs. It is interesting to note that lack of funds was seldom mentioned as a major reason for an organization going out of existence, although it is, of course, a primary determinant of the activities the organization can undertake.

ISAR has attempted to encourage sustainability in several ways. The insistence on high standards, and the provision of one-on-one assistance in preparing grant applications, work plans and budgets, has provided NGOs with practical experience in applying to other donors for funding. Information on funding sources has been systematically collected and provided upon request. Management capacity has been enhanced through regional training workshops designed to develop leadership and team-building skills and by one-on-one consultations to assist with on-going problems (for example, resolving internal disputes and developing strategies for working with the mass media and government). ISAR has also attempted to encourage collaboration between NGOs, among other ways by announcing a special grant round for cooperative projects, which should lead to more viable organizational units. Finally, ISAR staff have established Ednannia, an indigenous NGO with nine associate NGOs serving as regional centers whose goal is to support and provide leadership for Eco-NGO community.

How effective have these efforts been? In an attempt to monitor progress towards sustainability, ISAR developed three additional impact indicators: NGO capacity, NGO image, and NGO self-sufficiency. Questions on these three topics were added to the impact questionnaire completed by each grantee at the end of the grant period. For the previous years, ISAR staff reviewed the narrative reports submitted by grantees to gather data on these three new indicators.

- **NGO Capacity.** To judge if a project resulted in increased resources or skills to undertake future projects, ISAR asked NGOs to consider whether there had been an increase in contacts with other organizations (government agencies, the media, the business community, academics and scientists, other NGOs, donors, or international organizations), growth in the number of active members or volunteers, growth in its stock of relevant literature or equipment (slide projectors, computers, copying machines, video equipment, etc.), and the extent of training and first-hand experience (e.g. conducting workshops, implementing projects, undertaking research) they had accumulated. ISAR’s database indicates that the percent of projects reporting improved capacity increased dramatically, from 17% (35 out of 201 projects) in 1994 to 82% (46 out of 56 projects) in 1998-99.
- **NGO Image.** A persistent problem faced by NGOs in the region is a poor image among the population at large. Often, citizens distrust NGOs and view them as solely created for the purpose of obtaining funds from international donors for personal gain rather than to benefit the community. To counter such opinions, ISAR encouraged NGOs to use outreach activities not only to inform the public about environmental issues, but also to enhance citizens’

perceptions about the positive impact of NGOs. Indicators tracked by ISAR of improved NGO image included an interest by other domestic or foreign NGOs in cooperating with a given NGO, increased public awareness of an NGO and its activities, requests by the public for information from an NGO or to participate in its activities, and recognition of an NGO's contribution by government authorities. The database indicates an equally dramatic increase in projects reporting such improvements in image, from 18% in 1994 to 76% in 1996 and 82% in 1998-99.

- **NGO Self-sufficiency.** To monitor progress towards self-sufficiency, ISAR asked NGOs whether they had a stable, established clientele, whether they had developed a system for attracting new clients, and whether they had developed an effective, transparent financial accounting system with oversight by an independent inspector. In contrast to the other two sustainability indicators, the measure for NGO self-sufficiency rose sharply between 1995-96 (from 33% to 65% of projects), but then declined to 39% between 1997-99.

The principal value of these indicators is that they serve as signals to the NGOs about issues and concerns they should be working on. They also provide some indication about the number of NGOs that are making serious efforts to cope with these issues. But they provide no objective basis on which to measure the extent of progress towards these goals. The best we can do is to rely on judgements derived from interviews and activity reports.

A significant number of organizations that received ISAR grants have expanded their activities and gone on to attract support from other donors. Examples include the **Kyiv Ecological-Cultural Center, Environmental Education Association, Gutta, EcoPravo, Mama-86, Green World, Citizens Watch**, and the **Youth Environmental League of Pridneprovie**. A few in Moldova, where the law permits it, have developed local sources of funds by charging for their services. **Moldova-Eco**, for example, collects fees from government agencies and industries for its consulting services; and the newspaper *Natura* has been able to raise funds from subscriptions. Others who have not been able to generate alternative sources of funds have scaled back their activities – examples here include **AGROECO, Deti Mira, Gaia, UNION, Ruthenia, Stalkir, EcoPlai, Edelweiss**, and **Kudesnik** – or have gone out of business. Table 12, using criteria defined in its footnotes, indicates that 10% of the organizations that ISAR funded are “definitely sustainable,” 24% are “probably sustainable,” 45% have significantly curtailed their activities, and 20% have closed.

With one or two exceptions, even organizations that have raised alternative sources of funds remain vulnerable in at least two ways. First, their leadership structure is thin. Few have more than one or two key personnel, in most cases these individuals receive little or no income from the organization, and very few have boards of directors that see to the recruitment of new leaders. Second, nearly all remain dependent on foreign donors. For example, In Ukraine, a government fund established to support NGOs never operated as it was designed and has ceased to exist. There is no culture of private philanthropy and it is unlikely to develop so long as economic conditions remain poor. In Ukraine and Belarus, government regulations do not permit non-profit organizations to receive payment for the services or products they produce. Thus, for nearly all organizations, improving financial sustainability has involved reducing dependence on a single foreign donor. More could be done in this area, for example, by appealing to the large numbers of people from these three countries living abroad. However, the fact remains that domestic sources of funds are extremely limited and likely to remain so for some time.

The other organizations – those that have not yet developed to the point that they can compete for larger grants – are, of course, even more vulnerable. If no other source of small grants replaces

the ISAR program in the near future, most of them will become dormant and eventually cease to exist.

A final note should be added about Ednannia. One of ISAR's objectives has been to leave behind a local organization capable of raising funds to support the environmental movement, building on the experience of ISAR's local staff. In 1997, ISAR staff, together with several well-established Ukrainian NGOs, formed Ednannia, an indigenous Ukrainian organization that seeks to foster the professional and organizational development of local NGOs; to improve the public image of NGOs in the region; to encourage cooperation among NGOs, the government, and business sectors; and to foster networks among NGOs and grassroots activists. With the help of well-established environmental NGOs in different regions, Ednannia has established nine regional support centers and has begun developing training programs for local NGOs based on a needs assessment exercise. Ednannia has applied to private foundations for funding and, with its member NGOs, is attempting to establish partnerships with similar organizations in Western Europe and the United States.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

The main conclusions of this evaluation can be summarized under three headings: implementation procedures; output and impact; and sustainability. After briefly characterizing the report's findings in these areas, the remainder of this section considers implications for future work in this area.

4.1 Implementation Procedures. The ISAR-West NIS operation probably represents best practice in the management of small grant programs, and not just in the environment field. This can be seen in their grant-making procedures (rigorous application process, work-plans focused on achieving specified program impacts, the introduction of competition for a limited amount of funds, review by an external board of local experts), in the nature of the technical assistance and training they provided (one-on-one assistance to develop a satisfactory proposal during the project design phase, on-call assistance during implementation, insistence on submission of a satisfactory self-evaluation at the end of each project before being eligible for future projects, provision of information about why decisions were made the way they were) and in their general style of operations (low overheads, balanced, professional approach, transparency).

The only qualification that might be made to this statement pertains to ISAR's evaluation procedures. Self-evaluation by the NGOs is important as a learning device that helps ensure that lessons derived from such evaluations are fed back into the design and implementation of future projects. But they could usefully be supplemented by objective, external judgements (by ISAR staff or board members) about how much had been accomplished. This would also be helpful to the NGOs, making them rethink their self-assessments if there is a discrepancy; and it could be a learning process for ISAR staff and board members in making decisions on future rounds of project proposals.

4.2 Output and impact. If it were possible to calculate a benefit-cost ratio, or an internal rate of return, for this program, there can be little doubt that it would be very high. The benefits are, to a large extent, encapsulated in the success stories reviewed in section 3.2. On the environment side, we have observed the creation of significant national organizations like EcoPravo and Mama-86 plus a host of organizations working on serious localized problems, and making headway with relevant government entities and businesses, especially at the local level. On the democracy-building side, the results are more diffuse because they involve empowering individuals to act in their own interest, networking, information sharing, cooperation between NGOs and government agencies, establishing ties between NGOs and the media, and NGO leaders becoming involved in public office; but they are probably of more significance given the Soviet legacy on civil society.

All this has been accomplished at miniscule cost – \$1.8 million spread over six years. If only one of today's major Eco-NGOs had been established during this period, the benefit-cost ratio would be respectably high. Of course, many individual projects had little or no significant output or impact. That was undoubtedly expected by the designers of this program, just as a gardener expects to scatter many more seeds than he expects will grow into healthy, productive plants.

4.3 Sustainability. ISAR has done as much as it can to prepare its grantees to get along without its help in the future, and we have reported on a number of the successes it has had in doing so. We have also observed that many of the organizations that have failed to find replacements for ISAR's small grants and technical assistance have not, at least yet, gone out of business. They have limited their activities to what they can do without this help. Over time, however, it is likely that loss of forward momentum and frustration will result in their leaders

slowly drifting away to more personally rewarding activities. But it is important to recognize that all these organizations – even the strongest and most successful – are still dependent on foreign financing. Domestic sources have yet to develop and, with a couple exceptions, there is no significant prospect of charging for their services in the foreseeable future.

Foreign sources have not been fully explored and tapped. No systematic effort has been made to seek help from the large and relatively well-to-do diaspora of individuals of West NIS emigrants and overseas relatives. Small organizations are at a serious disadvantage in trying to develop such connections. What is needed is an umbrella organization that undertakes this task on a professional, full-time basis. Ednannia was established by ISAR staff to fill that role; but it too will require external funding for the foreseeable future.

4.4 Where to go from here? Perhaps the most important questions to ask here is whether a small grant program in the environmental field is still needed.

So far as the environment is concerned, one could argue that during the last six years, the main goal of the ISAR program – to create a larger and more viable Eco-NGO community – has been achieved and that the program would quickly show signs of diminishing returns if it were to be continued. We find this difficult to believe. What is more likely is that a small-grant program like ISAR's would run into diminishing returns only if it were greatly expanded. Such a program fills a niche in the range of programs necessary to achieve progress on the environmental front, an important and necessary niche that at this stage cannot be filled without outside sources of funds.

So far as democracy-building is concerned, the case for continuing – and indeed for expanding – the program is much stronger. It is difficult to argue that anything like diminishing returns has set in this area. The question here is whether it remains useful to continue linking environment and democracy-building. ISAR has argued convincingly that the environment remains an effective issue to galvanize public participation. Pollution, radiation, toxic dumps, poor water quality, and other tangible threats to public health and well-being directly affect all citizens, regardless of their social position, level of education or profession. Since government officials have an incentive (if not always the resources) to address environmental problems, this area provides an opportunity for NGOs and government to collaborate. Environment is also an area where NGOs are capable of achieving visible and demonstrative results, showing citizens that they can make a difference. It also an area where children can participate.

None of this speaks to the issue of whether ISAR should be the agency to carry on with a small grants program in this field. But if it is not, we would strongly recommend that whoever does it use much the same procedures and style that ISAR has developed. Nor does this discussion speak to the issue of whether USAID should continue funding such a program. USAID deserves a great deal of praise for developing and funding this program in the first place; whether it should continue to do so is separate question. But some external agency is needed, and USAID continues to include grass-roots democracy-building among its strategic objectives.

ANNEX A : TABLES

1. ISAR BUDGET

Cumulative Expenses and Income, May 4, 1993 to September 30, 1999

Expenses	West NIS 310129 Field Advance Expenses	West NIS 310120 WDC Expenses	Total West NIS Expenses-to-Date	Total West NIS USAID Budget
Audit	0.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00
Bank Charges	22,648.75	1,781.00	24,429.75	36,886.00
Benefits-(US)	0.00	24,230.24	24,230.24	21,544.00
Benefits (Regional)	12,947.46	0.00	12,947.46	34,244.00
Communications	31,229.56	6,027.50	37,257.06	36,757.00
Copying/Printing	17,589.84	1.78	17,591.62	19,000.00
Equipment	31,817.35	11,808.57	43,625.92	26,000.00
Field Advances	0.00	7,284.78	7,284.78	0.00
Grants (NGO)*	908,494.33	22,505.67	931,000.00	931,000.00
Consultants	62,757.33	(115.00)	62,642.33	47,500.00
Occupancy	22,778.78	37,380.00	60,158.78	54,600.00
Publications	5,044.06	3,310.52	8,354.58	11,000.00
Salaries (Regional)	285,927.00	362.00	286,289.00	262,740.00
Salaries-(US)	0.00	164,879.97	164,879.97	167,647.00
Supplies	52,103.90	5,258.27	57,362.17	54,290.00
Travel (International)	8,188.15	25,405.48	33,593.63	50,650.00
Travel (Regional)	63,366.71	0.00	63,366.71	81,156.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,524,893.22	\$313,620.78	\$1,838,514.00	1,838,514.00

Notes:

* Risograph \$9,480 included into grants

1. Equipment transport was combined with US/NIS travel
2. Temporaries/Consultants was combined with Interpreting/Translating
3. Rent was changed to occupancy
4. Salaries include housing allowance
5. Legal fees combined with bank charges
6. Indirect Costs of \$71,595 (12,716 old and 58,879 renewal) were added to DC budget (9/96)
7. Benefits of \$20,116 were added to DC budget (9/96)
8. Salaries of \$118,389 were added to DC budget (9/96)
9. Travel of \$17,900 was added to DC budget (9/96)
10. \$1,500 balance of Kyiv Audit budget transferred to DC Audit budget and \$48, 278 in salaries and \$10,413 in benefits was transferred to DC Indirect Costs budget (12/96)
11. West NIS total budget here combined with 6-10 above=\$2,041,850

2. Number of Eco-NGOs, Funds Awarded, and Population, by country.

	Population (in millions)	Number of NGOs*	Number of NGOs per million person	Number of NGO submitting proposals	Percent of NGOs submitting proposals	Number of NGOs supported	Percent of NGOs supported	Percent of NGOs submitting proposals supported
West NIS	66.65	830	12.45	514	61.93%	291	35.06%	56.61%
Belarus	10.2	110	10.78	71	64.55%	50	45.45%	70.42%
Moldova	4.35	101	23.22	50	49.50%	33	32.67%	66.00%
Ukraine	52.1	619	11.88	393	63.49%	208	33.60%	52.93%

* In existence at one time or another during ISAR's operation. Of the 830 in WNIS, 574 are currently in existence (see Table 3).

3. Number of Eco-NGOs Created and Supported Per Year

Time Period	Newly Created	Cumulative total
01.01.01 - 31.12.86	66	66
01.01.87 - 31.12.91	197	263
01.01.92 - 31.12.92	63	326
01.01.93 - 31.12.93	97	423
01.01.94 - 31.12.94	128	551
01.01.95 - 31.12.95	125	676
01.01.96 - 31.12.96	84	760
01.01.97 - 31.12.97	36	796
01.01.98 - 31.12.98	16	812
Out of business		-238
Total Remaining		574

4. Projects Submitted and Approved, Numbers and Amounts, by Country

		Seed and Cooperative Grants		Discretionary Grants	
		Number	Amount (\$)	Number	Amount (\$)
West NIS	Submitted	960	2,366,087		
	Approved	393	741,867	376	141,593
Belarus	Submitted	138	373,731		
	Approved	66	122,803	40	15,861
Moldova	Submitted	118	290,705		
	Approved	59	121,234	25	10,087
Ukraine	Submitted	704	1,701,651		
	Approved	268	497,830	311	115,645

5. Number of NGOs Receiving Grants by Number and Size of Grants

Number of Grants	Number of NGOs			
	West NIS	Ukraine	Belarus	Moldova
1	142	94	30	18
2	68	55	8	5
3	23	14	7	2
4	10	7	1	2
More than 4	48	38	4	6
TOTAL :	291	208	50	33

Amount of money	Number of NGOs			
Up to \$500	80	61	13	6
\$501 to \$5000	164	114	30	20
More than \$5000	47	33	7	7
TOTAL :	291	208	50	33

6. Percent of Projects Submitted by Capitals and Provinces

West NIS

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Capitals	84.62%	55.86%	58.68%	57.64%	48.17%	40.48%
Provinces	15.38%	44.14%	41.32%	42.36%	51.83%	59.52%
Total :	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Belarus

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Capitals	100.00%	95.83%	87.50%	75.36%	65.52%	54.55%
Provinces	0.00%	4.17%	12.50%	24.64%	34.48%	45.45%
Total :	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Moldova

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Capitals	100.00%	95.00%	94.12%	95.35%	80.77%	65.00%
Provinces	0.00%	5.00%	5.88%	4.65%	19.23%	35.00%
Total :	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Ukraine

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Capitals	77.78%	49.64%	50.98%	46.74%	35.78%	33.68%
Provinces	22.22%	50.36%	49.02%	53.26%	64.22%	66.32%
Total :	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

7. Percent of Funds Awarded in Capitals and Provinces.**West NIS**

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Capitals	89.41%	65.12%	60.14%	61.05%	49.18%	42.60%
Provinces	10.59%	34.88%	39.86%	38.95%	50.82%	57.40%
Total :	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Belarus

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Capitals	100.00%	100.00%	86.34%	74.12%	66.91%	71.40%
Provinces	0.00%	0.00%	13.66%	25.88%	33.09%	28.60%
Total :	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Moldova

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Capitals	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	97.28%	86.35%	65.34%
Provinces	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.72%	13.65%	34.66%
Total :	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Ukraine

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Capitals	84.94%	59.10%	48.99%	40.90%	25.67%	32.08%
Provinces	15.06%	40.90%	51.01%	59.10%	74.33%	67.92%
Total :	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

8. Disposition of Projects

Status	West NIS		Ukraine	
	Amount (\$)	Number	Amount (\$)	Number
Completed	776,590	709	551,372	540
Closed	32,376	27	19,014	18
Rejected (insufficient funds)	0	101	0	79
Never went to board	0	72	0	49
Approved but not financed	0	7	0	5
Rejected (poor quality)	0	519	0	411
Cooperative project (funded by ISAR-DC)	0	2	0	2
Financed, in process	74,496	34	0	21
Total:	883,462	1471	43,090	

9. Percent of Projects Submitted by Category

Category	West NIS	Belarus	Moldova	Ukraine
Nature conservation	13.06%	6.74%	14.58%	13.90%
NGO development	22.74%	28.65%	15.28%	22.76%
Sustainable development	5.09%	3.93%	2.78%	5.60%
Eco-education	5.02%	3.37%	7.64%	4.94%
Eco-law	1.15%	0.00%	1.39%	1.31%
Public awareness	39.24%	40.45%	47.92%	37.87%
Eco-monitoring	10.76%	11.24%	9.72%	10.82%
Energy Conservation	2.94%	5.62%	0.69%	2.80%
Total:	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

10. Eco-NGOs Initiated and Closed, ISAR Grantees and Others

	Initiated	Closed		Currently Operating
	Number	Number	Percent	Number
Total	812	238	29	574
Non-Grantees	521	179	34	348
Grantees	291	59	20	241
Belarus	50	13	26	37
Moldova	33	3	9	30
Ukraine	208	43	21	165

Note: See text for discussion of meaning of closed.

11 A. Projects by Impact Category and Year – West NIS

Category	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998-1999	Cumulative
Total Projects Assessed	13	201	218	123	83	56	694
Media Interest	2 15.4%	107 53.2%	126 57.8%	96 78%	69 83%	39 70%	439 63.3%
Government Support	4 30.8%	71 35.3%	94 43.1%	71 57.7%	57 68.7%	38 68%	335 48.3%
Public Awareness	13 100%	191 95.0%	212 97.2%	119 96.7%	76 91.6%	48 86%	659 95.0%
Environmental Improvements	4 30.8%	70 34.8%	86 39.4%	50 40.7%	35 42.2%	19 34%	264 38.0%
Environmental Policy	2 15.4%	59 29.4%	70 32.1%	66 53.7%	40 48.2%	23 41%	260 37.5%
NGO Network Building	7 53.8%	91 45.3%	117 53.7%	88 71.5%	53 63.9%	32 57%	388 55.9%
NGO Capacity Building	0 0.0%	35 17.4%	39 17.9%	89 72.4%	55 66.3%	46 82%	264 38.0%
NGO Image	0 0.0%	48 23.9%	40 18.3%	94 76.4%	60 72.3%	42 75%	284 40.9%
NGO Self-Sufficiency	0 0.0%	38 18.9%	71 32.6%	80 65.0%	33 39.8%	22 39%	244 35.2%

11 B. Projects by Impact Category and Year – Ukraine

Category / Year	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998-1999	Cumulative
Total Projects Assessed	9	178	170	73	53	44	527
Media Interest	2 22.2%	98 55.1%	99 58.2%	55 75.3%	44 83.0%	28 63.6%	326 61.9%
Government Support	3 33.3%	63 35.4%	73 42.9%	41 56.2%	37 69.8%	30 68.2%	247 46.9%
Public Awareness	9 100%	170 95.5%	167 98.2%	70 95.9%	48 90.6%	37 84.1%	501 95.1%
Environmental Improvements	3 33.3%	64 36.0%	69 40.6%	28 38.4%	22 41.5%	13 29.5%	199 37.8%
Environmental Policy	1 11.1%	55 30.9%	52 30.6%	36 49.3%	27 50.9%	19 43.2%	190 36.1%
NGO Network Building	6 66.7%	80 44.9%	88 51.8%	53 72.6%	37 69.8%	27 61.4%	291 55.2%
NGO Capacity Building	0 0.0%	25 14.0%	26 15.3%	53 72.6%	36 67.9%	37 84.1%	177 33.6%
NGO Image	0 0.0%	37 20.8%	23 13.5%	54 74.0%	38 71.7%	32 72.7%	184 34.9%
NGO Self-Sufficiency	0 0.0%	25 14.0%	50 29.4%	44 60.3%	21 39.6%	16 36.4%	156 29.6%

11 C. Projects by Impact Category and Year – Belarus

Category / Year	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998-1999	Cumulative
Total Projects Assessed	3	13	25	30	14	4	89
Media Interest	0 0%	5 38.5%	11 44.0%	22 73.3%	12 85.7%	4 100.0%	54 60.7%
Government Support	0 0%	5 38.5%	8 32.0%	14 46.7%	9 64.3%	2 50.0%	38 42.7%
Public Awareness	3 100%	12 92.3%	24 96.0%	29 96.7%	13 92.9%	3 75.0%	84 94.4%
Environmental Improvement	1 33.3%	4 30.8%	11 44.0%	11 36.7%	7 50.0%	1 25.0%	35 39.3%
Environmental Policy	1 33.3%	2 15.4%	8 32%	14 46.7%	6 42.9%	1 25.0%	32 36.0%
NGO Network Building	1 33.3%	8 61.5%	16 64.0%	17 56.7%	8 57.1%	1 25.0%	51 57.3%
NGO Capacity Building	0 0.0%	8 61.5%	8 32.0%	19 63.3%	8 57.1%	3 75.0%	46 51.7%
NGO Image	0 0.0%	9 69.2%	11 44.0%	22 73.3%	8 57.1%	3 75.0%	53 59.6%
NGO Self-Sufficiency	0 0.0%	11 84.6%	12 48.0%	18 60.0%	4 28.6%	3 75.0%	48 53.9%

Table 11 D. Projects by Impact Category and Year – Moldova

Category / Year	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998-1999	Cumulative
Total Projects Assessed	1	10	23	20	16	8	78
Media Interest	0 0.0%	4 40.0%	16 69.6%	19 95.0%	13 81.3%	7 87.5%	59 75.6%
Government Support	1 100.0%	3 30%	13 56.5%	16 80.0%	11 68.8%	6 75.0%	50 64.1%
Public Awareness	1 100.0%	9 90%	21 91.3%	20 100%	15 93.8%	8 100.0%	74 94.9%
Environmental Improvements	0 0.0%	2 20%	6 26.1%	11 55.0%	6 37.5%	5 62.5%	30 38%
Environmental Policy	0 0.0%	2 20%	10 43.5%	16 80.0%	7 43.8%	3 37.5%	38 48.7%
NGO Network Building	0 0.0%	3 30%	13 14%	18 90.0%	8 50.0%	4 50.0%	46 59.0%
NGO Capacity Building	0 0.0%	2 20%	5 21.7%	17 85.0%	11 68.8%	6 75.0%	41 52.6%
NGO Image	0 0.0%	2 20%	6 26.1%	18 90.0%	14 87.5%	7 87.5%	47 60.3%
NGO Self-Sufficiency	0	2	9	18	8	3	40 51.3%

Table 12. Sustainability of ISAR Grantees

	Belarus	Moldova	Ukraine	West NIS
Definitely Sustainable	2	4	23	29
Probably Sustainable	8	11	52	71
Others				
Sustainability uncertain	27	15	90	132
Closed	13	3	43	59
Total	50	33	208	291

Notes: “Definitely Sustainable” organizations are those that are continuously active and financed, part of a coalition or network, have permanent staff and premises, and have expanded their activities. “Probably Sustainable” organizations are similar but not regularly and adequately financed and therefore have had to limit their activities. Judgements about placement of organizations in these categories were made by ISAR staff.

ANNEX B. INFORMATION PROVIDED TO APPLICANTS (APPLICATION, EVALUATION CRITERIA, ETC.)

(translation from Russian)

ISAR: INITIATIVE FOR SOCIAL ACTION AND RENEWAL IN EURASIA

"SEEDS OF DEMOCRACY" PROGRAM

("Sowing the Seeds of Democracy: Environmental Grantmaking in the NIS")

Supported by the US Agency for International Development (USAID)

Information for Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine

*** ** ** ** **

GENERAL INFORMATION

The American non-governmental, not-for-profit organization ISAR: Initiative for Social Action and Renewal in Eurasia is continuing its "Seeds of Democracy" program, which provides financial, information and technical support for projects related to the environment carried out by non-governmental organizations in the countries of the Newly Independent States (NIS).

The goal of the program is to strengthen and broaden the environmental movement in the NIS by stimulating the role of non-governmental environmental organizations in the development of civil society, as well as supporting the activities focused on solving environmental problems.

Financing for the program comes from the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

Individual organizations as well as associations of organizations may participate in the program. All financial and technical support received from the program may only be used for public voluntary activity. Support for scientific research and commercial activities will not be supported by ISAR.

Financial Support

Non-governmental organizations may receive funding for activities in the following areas:

- nature conservation, including both land and species, and raising environmental culture
- fighting pollution
- environmental monitoring
- environment and health
- environmental rights
- conducting independent environmental impact assessments
- environmental education
- environmental philosophy
- sustainable natural resource use, and alternative energy
- development of information networks and the activities of information centers

- increasing environmental information in mass media
- organizational development of non-governmental environmental organization
- other projects related to the environment

General Requirements

Proposed projects should have a concrete goal related to the field of environment, include components to increase public awareness, and include a description of how the results of the projects will be evaluated.

LEVELS OF FUNDING

1. Seeds grant:
 - up to 2,000 US dollars: for an organization applying for first-time ISAR funding
 - up to 3,000 US dollars: for an organization already successfully completing an ISAR-funded project
2. Cooperative grant:
 - up to 5,000 US dollars: for a cooperative project between two or more NIS organizations already successfully completing an ISAR-funded project (Note: only registered NGOs may apply for cooperative grants)
3. Discretionary grant:
 - up to 500 US dollars: for an organization at the beginning stage of its development or in case of immediate need

HOW TO APPLY FOR A GRANT

General Requirements

Grant proposals should include one copy of the following material in Russian:

- proposal text (no more than 7 pages for a seeds grant and no more than 10 pages for a cooperative grant)
- application information (which includes project budget)
- a copy of the organization's by-laws and proof of registration (in order to receive a grant from ISAR, it is not necessary to be a registered organization; however, proof of registration plays a positive role in the grant review process)

Submitting the Proposal

Proposals may be delivered to the ISAR office in Kyiv or sent via mail (in written form or on diskette), fax, or e-mail to the below address:

ISAR Branch
P.O. Box 447/6
Kyiv, Ukraine 252150
Tel/Fax: (044) 269-85-42
E-mail: isar@isar.Kyiv.ua

After receipt of the proposal, ISAR's project coordinators begin working with it. The coordinator will send a letter to the grant applicant within three days after the receipt of the proposal regarding any additions or remarks, upon which the grant applicant may revise the proposal.

The deadline for receipt of the final proposal (which has been revised according to the recommendations of ISAR's project coordinators) is two months before the meeting of the Board. Proposals received later will be reviewed at the following Board meeting. Within one month after this deadline, all other additional materials related to the proposal must be received. (This must include: information about grants already received from ISAR along with amount of each grant; a list of persons responsible for carrying out the proposed project; and a short description(s) about the results of projects the organization has already carried out.) The proposal and all related materials will be copied for all Board members and also added to ISAR's project database.

All proposed projects are categorized by the following eight categories: 1) Nature Conservation (preserving biodiversity, nature reserves, etc.); 2) NGO development; 3) Sustainable Development (sustainable natural resource use, sustainable agriculture, wastes/recycling, environmental management and environmental philosophy); 4) Environmental Education; 5) Environmental Law and Rights; 6) Environmental Awareness Raising (publications, information projects, environmental expeditions); 7) Environmental Assessment (environmental monitoring, independent environmental impact assessments, etc.); 8) Energy (alternative energy, energy conservation).

PROPOSAL REVIEW

Review of Proposals for Seeds or Cooperative Grants

Proposals for seeds grants and cooperative grants are reviewed at meetings of the Board of Experts, which are held every 2 to 4 months. The Board of Experts will review no more than one proposal (seeds or cooperative) per organization at each Board meeting. To be eligible to submit a proposal to the Board for review, an organization must have completed all previous ISAR-funded projects.

One month prior to the board meeting, all proposals and their appendixes are sent to all members of the Board along with an evaluation sheet. For regular seeds projects there are eight criteria (please see section on criteria.) The first three criteria are for evaluating the organization proposing the project, and the second five are for evaluating the proposed project itself. For cooperative projects, there is an additional criteria, namely how the combined efforts of the organizations proposing the project will achieve the project goal(s) set forth in the proposal.

The "Seeds of Democracy" program does not set quotas for different regions, but rather places value on the proposed activity, upon which the proposal is evaluated. Since the beginning of the program, the ISAR's "clientele," those submitting proposals, has grown three-fold. These groups, be they initiative groups, young organizations or experienced organizations, are the foundation of the "third sector." Given the current situation in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, it is important to support organizations at all levels. Therefore, ISAR has developed a flexible system for evaluating projects submitted by organizations with varying levels of experience. Because we do not require organizations to provide information about their funding, other than that received from ISAR, we divide proposals into four categories, based on the amount of funding already

received from ISAR: 1) never received funding from ISAR; 2) received less than \$5,000 from ISAR; 3) received \$5,000 or more from ISAR; and 4) received funding for cooperative projects.

ISAR provides support to an equal number of projects in each of the above mentioned categories in each grant round. In this light, ISAR staff prepares a list of projects on the evaluation sheets sent to the Board members, which is divided into categories reflecting the level of the organization (using above mentioned categories) with sub-categories reflecting the type of project (nature conservation, energy, etc.).

ISAR Board members don't only rate the projects, but also take note of the projects they feel should be supported for each level.

One week before the Board meeting, the Board members return their evaluation sheets to ISAR staff, who then: average the evaluation marks given by the Board for each of the eight (for cooperative proposals—nine) criteria; average the evaluation marks for the first three criteria and for the second five criteria; list the organizations in order according to the averages of Board evaluation marks (from highest to lowest); and indicate the number of Board members that felt this project/organization should be supported.

Projects that received seven votes for support (from nine board members) are automatically given funding and not discussed at the Board meeting unless any Board member has serious objections, in which case, the project is discussed at the Board meeting. Projects which received averages of 4 or above are discussed at the Board meeting.

Letters regarding the decisions of the Board will be sent to each organization submitting a proposal no later than 10 days after the Board meeting.

Review of Proposals for Discretionary Grants

Proposals for discretionary grants may be submitted at any time and will be reviewed by individual Board members rather than at Board meetings. ISAR only accepts one discretionary grant proposal from an organization at a time. To be eligible to submit a proposal for a discretionary grant, the organization must have completed all previous projects supported through an ISAR discretionary grant. A discretionary grant proposal may be submitted to ISAR even if an organization is currently carrying out a project supported through an ISAR seeds or cooperative grant. The period of review is 14 days, after which the organization will be notified of the decision.

APPROVED PROPOSALS

Upon Approval of Seeds or Cooperative Grants

If the Board awards funding to a project, the organization that proposed the project must sign an agreement with ISAR. As ISAR awards grants in incremental installments, if the project is approved by the Board, an organization must send a step-by-step budget with a timeline for the payment of grant installments. The grant recipient must also provide a bank statement with the organization's account number. All documents must be signed by the head of the organization and must include the organization's stamp. Each grant installment will be paid according to the budget the grant recipient provides to ISAR, and only after ISAR has received a financial and narrative report regarding the work completed with funds from the previous installment.

Reporting

Reports on project implementation consist of two parts:

- Narrative report
- Financial report

The narrative report should include detailed information about the project, including the results of the work conducted to-date. The final narrative report should also include the Evaluation of Project Results, provided by ISAR.

The financial report should categorized expenses and should include documents, that provide proof of the expense (i.e. receipts, tickets, vouchers) or copies of these documents. The expense categories should match those included in the budget provided to ISAR. Expenses should not exceed the line-item budget item by more than 10% of the total budget. Changes to any line-item budget may only be made in consultation with the ISAR administration. In such a case, a new budget should be provided reflecting these changes.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PROPOSALS REGARDING SPECIFIC
FIELDS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITY**

In addition to the general requirements, grant seekers are also required to meet requirements related to the specific field of activity into which the proposed project falls: (SEE ATTACHED INFO IN RUSSIAN)

Actions (public awareness campaigns, festivals, clean-ups, etc.)

Environmental Law

Independent Environmental Impact Assessments

Creating and Protecting Nature Reserves

Environmental Monitoring & Conservation of Biodiversity

Environmental Camps & Environmental Expeditions

Conducting Conferences, Seminars, Round tables

Publications

Preparation of Videos/Films

Organizational Support

Attachment

APPLICATION FORM for Seeds or Discretionary Grant Proposals

The following information should be provided by NGOs in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine in their proposals in the framework of the ISAR program "Seeds of Democracy," financed by USAID.

The proposal should have a title page that contains the following information: 1) name of proposed project; 2) Short description of project (one sentence); 3) field of environmental activity; 4) name of organization; 5) name of project coordinator(s); 6) requested amount (in \$US); 7) if discretionary grant, short description of urgent need.

Please include the following information in your application

1. Contact Information
 - 1.1. Name of organization
 - 1.2. Country
 - 1.3. Index (zip code)
 - 1.4. Oblast (region)
 - 1.5. City
 - 1.6. Street address of organization
 - 1.7. Mailing address of organization (if different than street address)
 - 1.8. Telephone number
 - 1.9. Fax number
 - 1.10. E-mail address
 - 1.11. First and last name of director of organization
 - 1.12. Home address of director of organization
 - 1.13. Home telephone of director of organization
 - 1.14. First and last name of project coordinator
 - 1.15. Home address of project coordinator
 - 1.16. Home telephone of project coordinator
2. General information about the proposed project
 - 2.1. Name of project
 - 2.2. total amount need to implement the project (in \$US)
 - 2.3. requested amount (in \$US)
 - 2.4. Short description of project (in one paragraph) that includes information about who, when, where, why, how, and expected results.
 - 2.5. Is the proposed project part of a larger program, that has or will have funding from other sources?
 - 2.6. Text filled in and signed and dated by Project Coordinator (see Russian version for text)
 - 2.7. Text filled in and signed and dated by head of organization (see Russian version for text)
 - 2.8. If organization is not a registered NGO, it should receive recommendation by head of a registered organization that is familiar with the organization submitting the proposal. Text filled in and signed and dated by head of recommending organization (see Russian version for text)

3. Information about Organization
 - 3.1. Main Goal
 - 3.2. Description of activities
 - 3.2.1. Types of environmental activity
 - 3.2.2. Focus group (general public, children, youth, specialists in concrete fields, mass media, etc.)
 - 3.3. Information about projects (about the project, funding for project, results of project)
 - 3.3.1. Main area of environmental activity
 - 3.3.2. Other areas of environmental activity
 - 3.4. Year established
 - 3.5. Place and date of registration (if registered)
 - 3.6. Status (public; noncommercial; charitable; scientific).
 - 3.7. Tax status (i.e. do you pay taxes?).
 - 3.8. Funding sources (membership dues, foundations and other sponsors, etc.)
 - 3.9. Do you have an office and equipment? If not, do you have access to them?
 - 3.10. Please describe your organizational structure
 - 3.10.1. Governing body
 - 3.10.2. Responsibilities of director
 - 3.10.3. Number of staff members
 - 3.10.4. Responsibilities of staff members. Is this their main place of work?
 - 3.10.5. Number of active members
 - 3.10.6. Role of volunteers
4. Information about Project Coordinator (this information is kept confidential)
 - 4.1. First and last name
 - 4.2. Education
 - 4.3. Main place of work
 - 4.4. Role in organization (staff, volunteer, etc.)
 - 4.5. Responsibilities in organization
 - 4.6. Recommendations (not obligatory)
5. Description of proposed project (please keep in mind that in order to successfully implement a project, you need to carefully plan your work, and clearly outline your goals, tasks, methods, work plan, budget.)
 - 5.1. Description of problem and why it is a priority
 - 5.2. Project goal. What are the long term results of its implementation.
 - 5.3. Project tasks. What are the concrete tasks that must be completed in order to reach your goal?
 - 5.4. Method of implementation. How are you going to carry out the tasks?
 - 5.5. Concrete, practical results expected from project:
 - 5.5.1. To what extent will the project influence policy-making in the sphere of environmental protection? (This includes the extent the project will also help enforce legislation related to environmental protection.)
 - 5.5.2. To what extent will the project result in environmental improvements?
 - 5.5.3. To what extent will the community/public be involved in the project?
 - 5.5.4. To what extent will other NGOs be invited to participate in the implementation of the project? To what extent does the implementation of the project foster the development of partnerships and networks among NGOs?

- 5.5.5. To what extent will government or local authorities be invited to participate in implementing the tasks set forward in the proposal?
 - 5.5.6. How, if at all, will mass media be used to implement the proposed project?
- 5.6. How will information about the results of the projects be disseminated?
- 5.7. Describe how, if at all, the work begun in the framework of the project will be continued.
- 6. Work Plan
 - 6.1. Period of implementation
 - 6.2. Provide work plan with detailed information about how each step will be accomplished and period of implementation for each step. (If the proposed project is awarded funding, this plan will be the basis for your budget, which is a step-by-step budget showing the amount needed to implement each phase of the project.)
- 7. Responsibilities of those persons involved in project
 - 7.1. First and last name
 - 7.2. Responsibilities related to project
 - 7.3. Description of responsibilities
 - 7.4. How often they will play a role in the project (number of hours a day, number of days per month)
 - 7.5. Work already completed by persons involved in project.
- 8. Possibility of further development and funding for project
- 9. Project Budget
 - 9.1. Budget period (how many months)
 - 9.2. Budget (use below format as guideline).
 - 9.3. Narrative budget (description of each line item in your budget). Note: the Board looks closely at this, please provide detailed information.

Budget Instructions

In setting up your tasks and work plan, in parallel, you should keep a list of expenses associated with each concrete step (for example, supplies, transportation expenses, etc.). Therefore, your budget will logically come from the tasks and steps for implementing the project. In creating the budget, keep in mind the expenses that your organization will be covering itself. Related to this, if the proposed project is part of a larger program that has funding from other sources, please include a general program budget that shows the amount of funding for the program coming from each source.

Please provide the budget in US Dollars using the current currency exchange rate.

Below is an example of the budget format:

Budget Expense Categories	Cost per item or cost per unit of time	Quality of item required	Period of time required	Total Sum	Cost share of your organiza- tion	Cost share from other sources	Total amount requested from ISAR
Equipment (purchase or rent)							
Office/Space Rental							
Communications expenses (telephone, mail, e-mail, etc.)							
Supplies							
Transport (include details about type of transportation)							
Travel expenses other than transport							
Honorariums/Salaries for those implementing the project (include information for separate responsibilities)							
TOTAL							

Attachment

Criteria for Evaluation of Seeds and Cooperative Projects, submitted to ISAR in the frameworks of the program Seeds of Democracy

In reviewing regular seeds grants, there are eight criteria. The first three (1.1, 1.2 and 1.3) provide the opportunity to evaluate the organization itself, and the second five (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5), the proposed project. In reviewing cooperative projects, please take into account the ability of the combined efforts of the organizations implementing the project to reach the project's goals (criteria 2.6).

As a result of the discussion of priorities at the January 1996 Board meeting, the program mainly supports projects that have concrete, practical results and that also provide a model demonstrating the effective participation of NGOs in society, better the image of NGOs as well as foster their participation in the decision-making processes. In addition, the program seeks to:

- support organizations, which have the capacity to carry out environmental activities, and projects, which may promote the role of the third sector in society and serve as an example for beginning organizations;
- support beginning organizations that are able to demonstrate their understanding of the problem, identify solid goals, tasks, methods of implementation and create a workplan.

Please mark each of the criteria below with 1 to 5 (5 being the highest mark).

I. *Evaluation of Organization* (1.1, 1.2 and 1.3)

1.1. *How well does the organization's goal and status fit the goals of the ISAR program?*

The program only includes funding for non-governmental, public organizations. Funding for scientific/research and commercial organizations will not be provided.

1.2. *Does the organization have the experience and qualifications to conduct the proposed projects in the sphere of environmental activities?*

1.3. *Necessity of providing support for this organization.*

In reviewing the proposal, please keep in mind the following factors:

- Where the NGO is located, in proximity to possible funding sources
- the experience in working with various foundations
- the immediate need of the organization
- amount of funding already received from ISAR

II. *Evaluation of Project* (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5 (and 2.6 for cooperative projects only))

2.1. *The importance of the project for the public/community*

2.2. *How well do the goals and tasks of the project fit the goals of the ISAR program?*

The goals of the ISAR program are to 1) support environmental NGOs and 2) to support projects in the sphere of the environment, proposed by environmental or other NGOs.

2.3. *How well do the methods of implementing the project as well as its workplan fit its goals?*

How

well thought out is the workplan?

2.4. *How well will information about the results of the project be disseminated?*

2.5. *Budget (does the budget fit with the project's goals and work plan?)*

For cooperative projects:

2.6. *The combined ability of the organizations implementing the project in order to reach the goals highlighted in the proposal.*

ANNEX C. PUBLICATIONS SUPPORTED BY ISAR-WEST NIS

Newspapers:

"Gutta" (15 issues)	- 73,500
"Human and Ecology" (11 issues)	- 5,500
"Natura" (8 issues)	- 36,100
"Bumble Bee" (3 issues)	- 1,500
"Environmental Digest"	- 22,000
"Mig"	- 30,000
"Environment and Health"	- 15,000

Journals:

"Belarusian Climate" (5 issues)	- 4,100
"Masjiuk"	- 300
"Belovezhskaya Forest" (2 issues)	- 10,000
"48th Parallel"	- 1,000
"Oikomena (Universe)"	- 1,700
"VITA"	- 1,000
Future Age Energy (6 issues)	- 7,000

Books:

"Most Asked Questions About Wind Energy"	- 2,000
"Energy Conserving Home"	- 8,000
"Untraditional Methods in Environmental Education"	- 1,500
"The Environmental Problems in Minsk and Paths to Their Solution"	- 1,000
"GeoEcology"	- 500
"Lake Sasyk Into the Captivity of Insanity"	- 180
"Energy in Ukraine: Which Path to Choose to Survive"	- 700
"Collection of International Conventions on Environment"	- 1,000
"History, Projects, Action"	- 500
"Arka" Ukrainian Quarterly Journal on Culture, Art, Literature and Science	- 2,000
"House" (Center for Permaculture)	- 1,000
"How Greens Can Work with Mass Media" (Boreiko/ Listopad)	- 2,000
"The Coming of the Biospheric Age"	- 3,000
"Energy: Strong Arguments"	- 10,000
"Building Homes with Straw Bales"	- 1,000
"The Experience of Danish NGOs in the Development of Balanced Energy Systems"	- 1,500
"Radiometry and Dosiometry"	- 1,000
"Path to Environmental Worldviews"	- 3,000
"The Basic Principles of Passive Solar Systems"	- 1,000
"Environmental Education in Schools"	- 3,000
"Play Alone, Play with Us"	- 1,000
"How to Form a Public Association"	- 1,000
"Safe Energy".	- 1,000
"For the Common Good"	- 1,000
"What Do We Want to Do for Sustainability?"	- 1,000
"Environmental Games in Schools"	- 1,000
"Environmental Games in Schools and Extracurricular Activities"	- 2,000

Booklets:

"Sustainable Development in Mining Regions"	- 150
"Signal"	- 1,000
"Primrose"	- 1,000
"Information for Environmental NGOs"	- 300
"The Power of Participation"	- 300
"Everything You Wanted to Know about Solar Energy"	- 2,000
"The Path to the Participation of Ukrainian Environmental NGO in the Implementation of the Pan- European Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation"	- 1,000
"Choosing the Way"	- 500
"First Bloom"	- 500
"Organizational Models"	- 800
"Protecting the Dnister"	- 500
"Big Problems of the Small River Bistivki"	- 80
"Lisya Bukhta"	- 500

Bulletins:

"Green News" (2 issues)	- 500
"Source"	- 40
"Environmental Monitoring" (3 issues)	- 2,000
"EcoPolis Monitoring" (2 issues)	- 1,025
"Khortitsa Today, Tomorrow and Forever" (2 issues)	- 500
"EcoClub"	- 22,000
"EcoDonbas"	- 5,000
"EcoInform"	- 300
"Nerush" (2 issues)	- 580
"Environmental Informational-Educational Bulletin" (2 issues)	- 460
"Green Bulletin"	- 200

Calendars:

"Ecology on Postcards"	- 3,000
"Greening of You"	- 800

Brochures:

"Green Homin"	- 300
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ANNEX D. INTERVIEWS

USAID:

Jennifer KARP	ISAR CTO	USAID/ENI/EEST	USAID Washington
Lea SWANSON	Former Environmental Advisor,	USAID/Kyiv	USAID RSC/Budapest
Sherry GROSSMAN	Desk Officer,	West NIS	USAID Washington
George INGRAM	AA ENI Bureau		USAID Washington
Alexandra BURKE	USAID/ENI/EEST		USAID Washington
Dan THOMPSON	Environmental Advisor,	USAID/Kyiv	USAID Kyiv
Marilynn SCHMIDT	Office Director,	DST, USAID/Kyiv	USAID Kyiv
Oleksander CHERKAS	Environmental Project Management Specialist		USAID Kyiv
Natalia GORDINKO	Former USAID/Kyiv		

EPA:

Bill FREEMAN	EPA	EPA Washington
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ISAR:

Eliza CLOSE	Executive Director	ISAR-DC
Kate WATTERS	Program Director	ISAR-DC
Irmgard HUNT	Board Member	ISAR-DC
Helena GUBAR	Program Director	ISAR-West NIS
Irina BELASHOVA	Program Manager	ISAR-West NIS
Schelene SMITH	Communications Officer	ISAR-West NIS
Natalia KRAVCHUK	ISAR Representative	Moldova
Sergei DOROZHUKU	ISAR Representative and Board Member	Belarus

REPRESENTATIVES FROM NGOs:

Natalia KRAVCHUK	Gutta-Club	Chisinau, Moldova
Taras LOGINNOV	Compass Club	Kyiv, Ukraine
Mikail MAGAL	Citizen Initiative, OGI International	Kyiv, Ukraine
Oleg LISTOPAD	Emergency Aid for Wilderness Conservation	Kyiv, Ukraine
Andrei MIKHAILIK	VEZHA Ukrainian Environmental Journalists' Association	Krivoi Rog, Ukraine
Elena KARETNIKOVA	AUNIECO Environmental Youth Center	Kyiv, Ukraine
Vladimir BOREIKO	Kyiv Environmental Cultural Center	Kyiv, Ukraine
Tamara MALKHOVA	Green Dossier	Kyiv, Ukraine
Svitlana VAKULENKO	Fund for Ukrainian Children's Salvation from the Chernobyl Tragedy	Kyiv, Ukraine
Adel BOSAK	Green World, Central Office	Kyiv, Ukraine
Natalia ULIANETS	Child and Environment	Kyiv, Ukraine
Boris VASILKOVSKIY	EcoPravo-Kyiv	Kyiv, Ukraine
Sergei TARASHCHUK	National EcoCenter of Ukraine (NECU)	Kyiv, Ukraine
Valentin SEREBRYAKOV	Ukrainian Society for the Protection and Study of Birds	Kyiv, Ukraine
Victor KHAZAN	Green World, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Branch	Dnipropetrovsk
Vadim ZHIZHIN	Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Organization Protecting Ukraine's Drinking Water	Dnipropetrovsk

Arnold FURMAN	Environmental Fund of Dnipropetrovsk	Dnipropetrovsk
Pavel KHAZAN	Youth Environmental League of Pridneprovie	Dnipropetrovsk
Natasha KHAZAN	Youth Environmental League of Pridneprovie	Dnipropetrovsk
Alla KORABLEVA	Youth Environmental League of Pridneprovie	Dnipropetrovsk
Mikhail MAZHAROV	Green World, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Branch	Dnipropetrovsk
Mikhail ZINCHENKO	Green World and ALTEN	Dnipropetrovsk
Grigoriy PASECHNIY	Green World, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Branch, Department of Geoecology at Dnipropetrovsk State University	Dnipropetrovsk
Vladimir MANUIK	Green World, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Branch Department of Geoecology at Dnipropetrovsk State University, Geoecological Natural Treasures of Ukraine	Dnipropetrovsk
Nikolai REZNIKOV	Public Environmental Organization	Dnipropetrovsk .
Yaroslav SERDUK	Institute for Issues of Ecology and Natural Resource Use	Dnipropetrovsk
Ludmila LOZA	Snowdrops (Proliski) Children's Environmental Organization,	Dnipropetrovsk
Yuri BABININ	Citizens' Watch	Nikopol, Ukraine
Vladimir BERESIN	Environmental Cultural Center	Artemovsk, Ukraine
Vera TREMBACH	Society of Mikhayl Varnyak	Pavlograd, Ukraine
Ivan RUSEV	Fund of Nature and Heritage	Odesa, Ukraine

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS:

Daniel Tairovich KARABAEV	Head environmental committee, Kyiv city council	Kyiv
Valentina V. PIDLISNYUK	Adviser to Chair for Environment, Ukrainian Parliament	Kyiv
Vladimir KOROTENKO	Dnipropetrovsk Department for Environmental Protection	Dnipropetrovsk

OTHERS:

Vladimir TIKHI	EPA project	Kyiv
Terry LEARY	Counterpart	Kyiv
Julianne KURDILIA	ABA/CEELI	Kyiv
Oxana TARASOVA	Peace Corps	Kyiv
Olexandr SNEGNIY	SOCIS-Gallup	Kyiv
Vera NANIVSKA	International Center for Policy Studies	Kyiv

ANNEX E: DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS CONSULTED

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